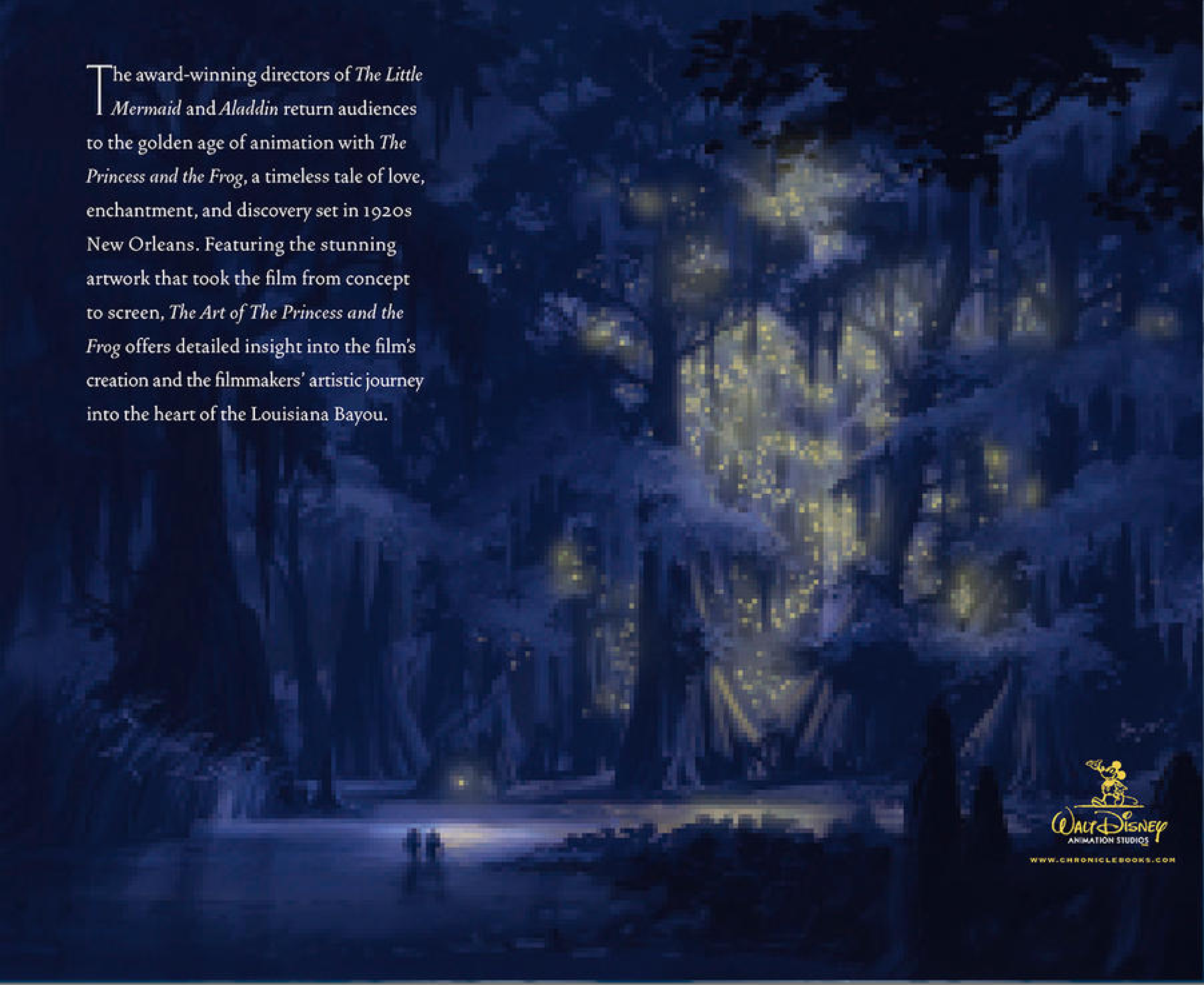
Walt Disney Pictures

The Art of THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG

by Jeff Kurtti   preface by John Lasseter   foreword by directors John Musker and Ron Clements

The award-winning directors of *The Little Mermaid* and *Aladdin* return audiences to the golden age of animation with *The Princess and the Frog*, a timeless tale of love, enchantment, and discovery set in 1920s New Orleans. Featuring the stunning artwork that took the film from concept to screen, *The Art of The Princess and the Frog* offers detailed insight into the film's creation and the filmmakers' artistic journey into the heart of the Louisiana Bayou.



Walt Disney Animation Studios
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by Jeff Kurtti

preface by John Lasseter

foreword by directors
John Musker and Ron Clements

CHRONICLE BOOKS
San Francisco

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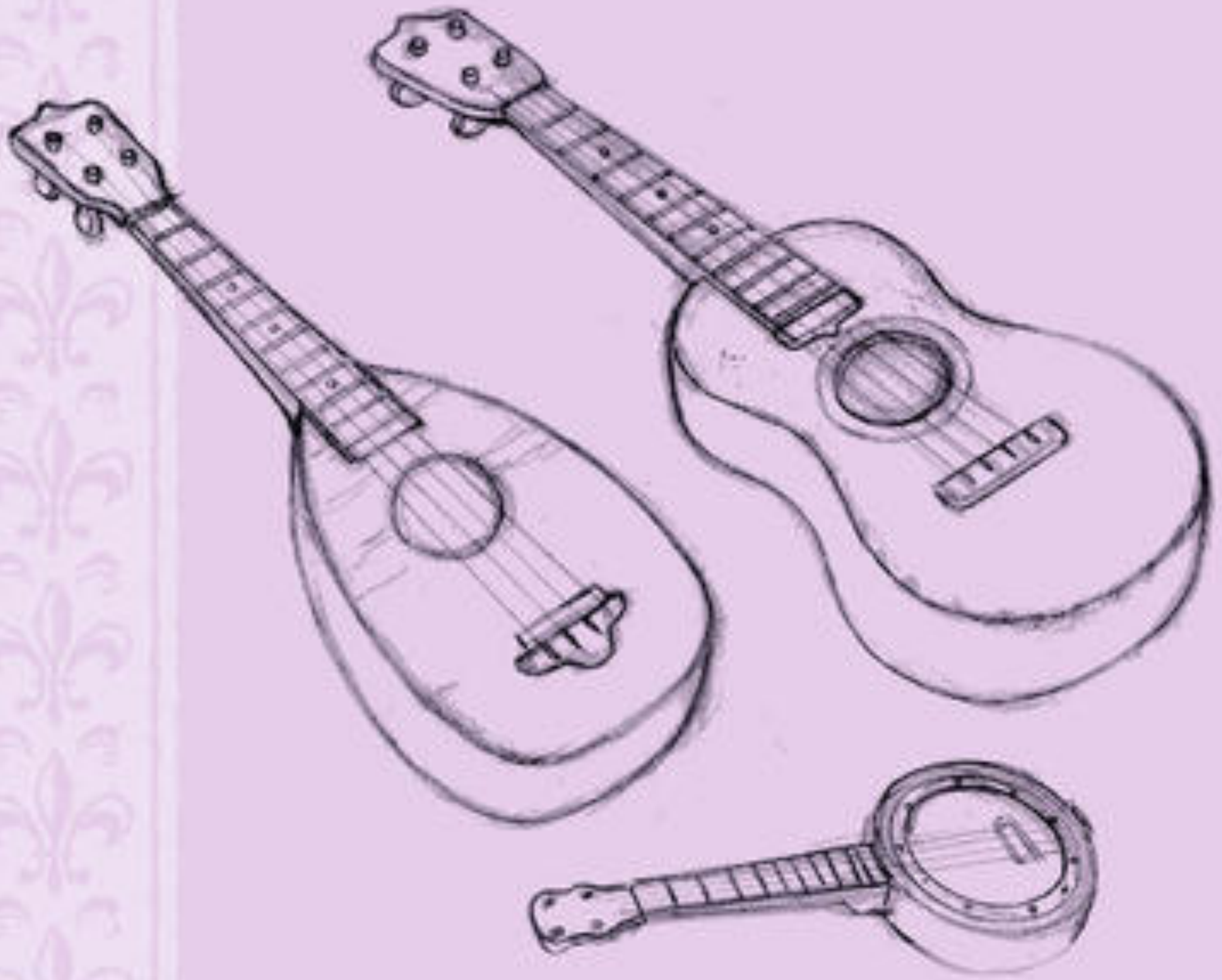

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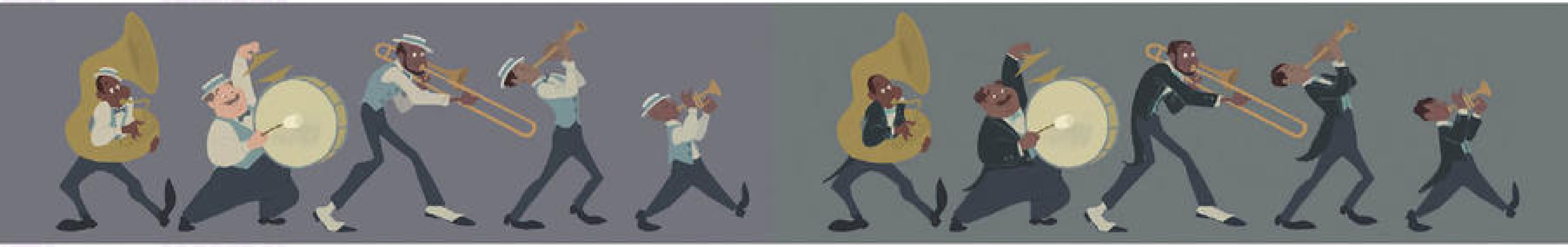

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PREFACE

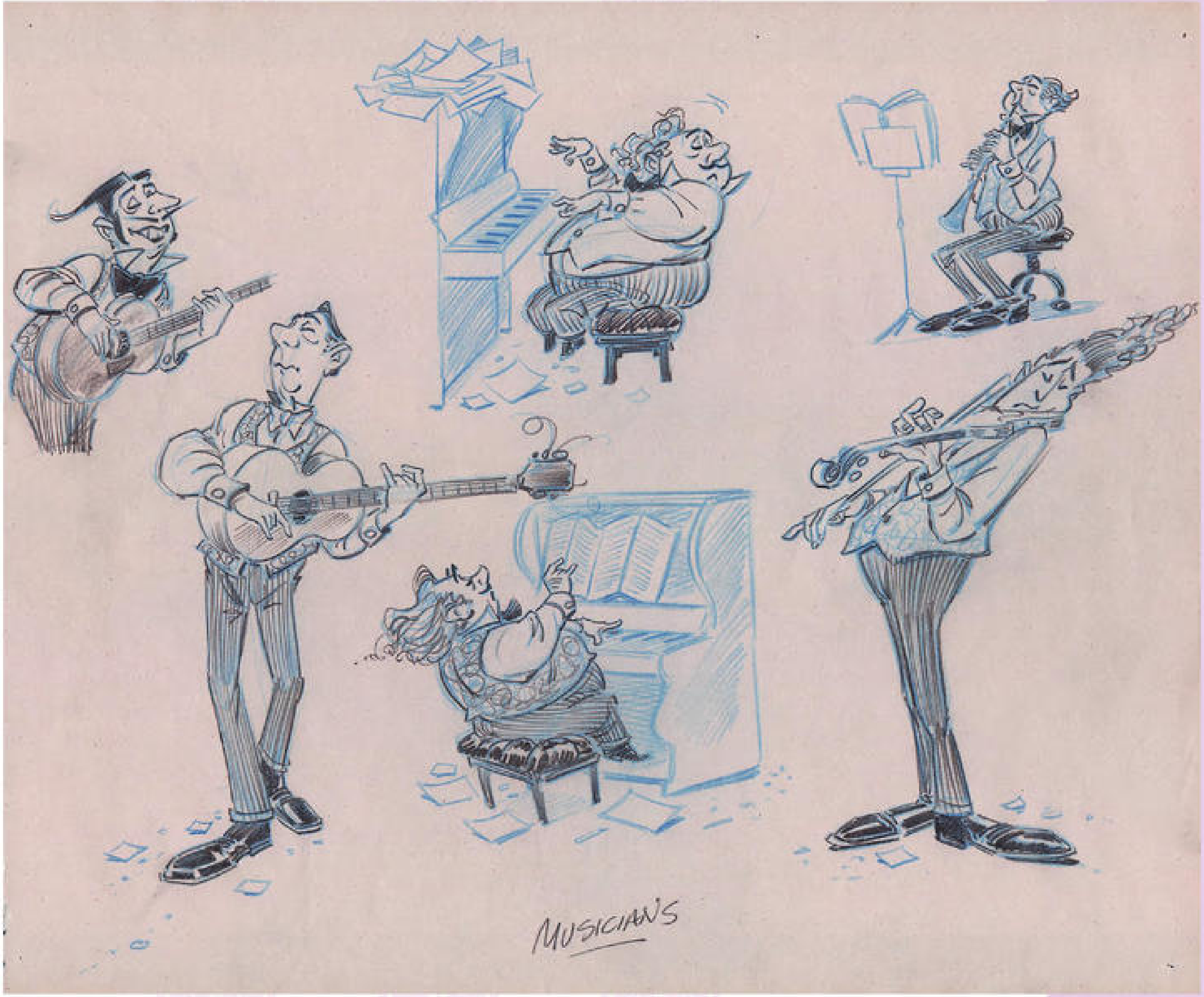
Ed Catmull and I have spent our careers developing the medium of computer animation. But we grew up on Walt Disney's films and have a deep love for the art form of hand-drawn animation. I can't tell you how sad I was when the studio announced that it was no longer going to make films in the style most closely associated with Walt himself. So when Ed and I came to Disney, the very first thing we did was start work on a hand-drawn animated film.

If we were going to continue the hand-drawn tradition and do it right, I knew we needed Ron Clements and John Musker back at the studio. They are guys I grew up with in the early days when we were just out of CalArts. Ron and John *are* Disney animation. They have made some of the finest Disney films of the new generation, particularly *The Little Mermaid* and *Aladdin*. Their idea of a clever twist on the story of "The Frog Prince" set in New Orleans enchanted us all. And when Ron and John pitched their vision as a musical, I said, "Done!"

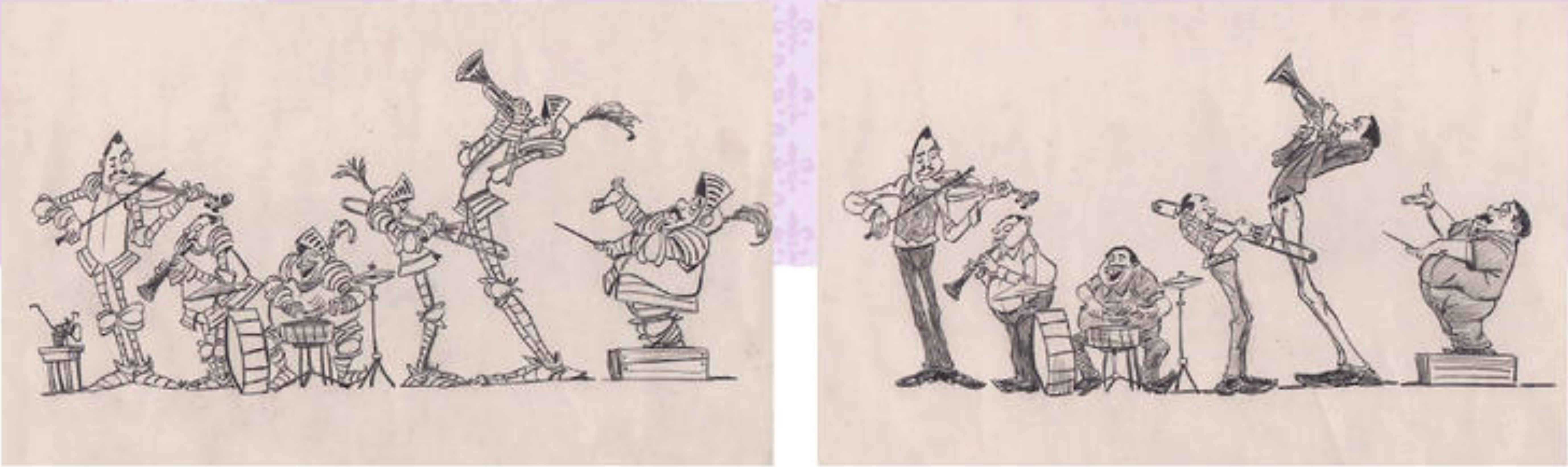
From the beginning of *The Princess and the Frog*, Ron and John set the bar exceptionally high for the rich look they wanted to achieve in the film's backgrounds, layouts, character designs, and coloration. We re-watched the films that Walt Disney made, and the one that really grabbed us was *Lady and the Tramp*. It's the pinnacle of Walt's artistic style, which he began to develop in *Steamboat Willie*, refined for *Snow White*, and employed all the way through *Lady*. After that, from *Sleeping Beauty* on, the look of the films became more stylized. But everything comes together in *Lady and the Tramp* to form a believable world—from the backgrounds to the character designs to the color styling that reinforces the emotions of each scene. With this inspiration, the lush look of Ron and John's new film evokes our fondest memories of Disney's classic fairy tales. More importantly, *The Princess and the Frog* gives new generations the opportunity to discover what we know: that this art form is absolutely spectacular.

This book celebrates the reunion of the many traditional animation artists brought back together in this studio on this film. It also gives us the chance to savor the amazing artistry that led up to the development of the film's final look and the stunning designs we see on-screen in *The Princess and the Frog*.

—JOHN LASSETER



Rik Maki | graphite



Rik Maki | graphite

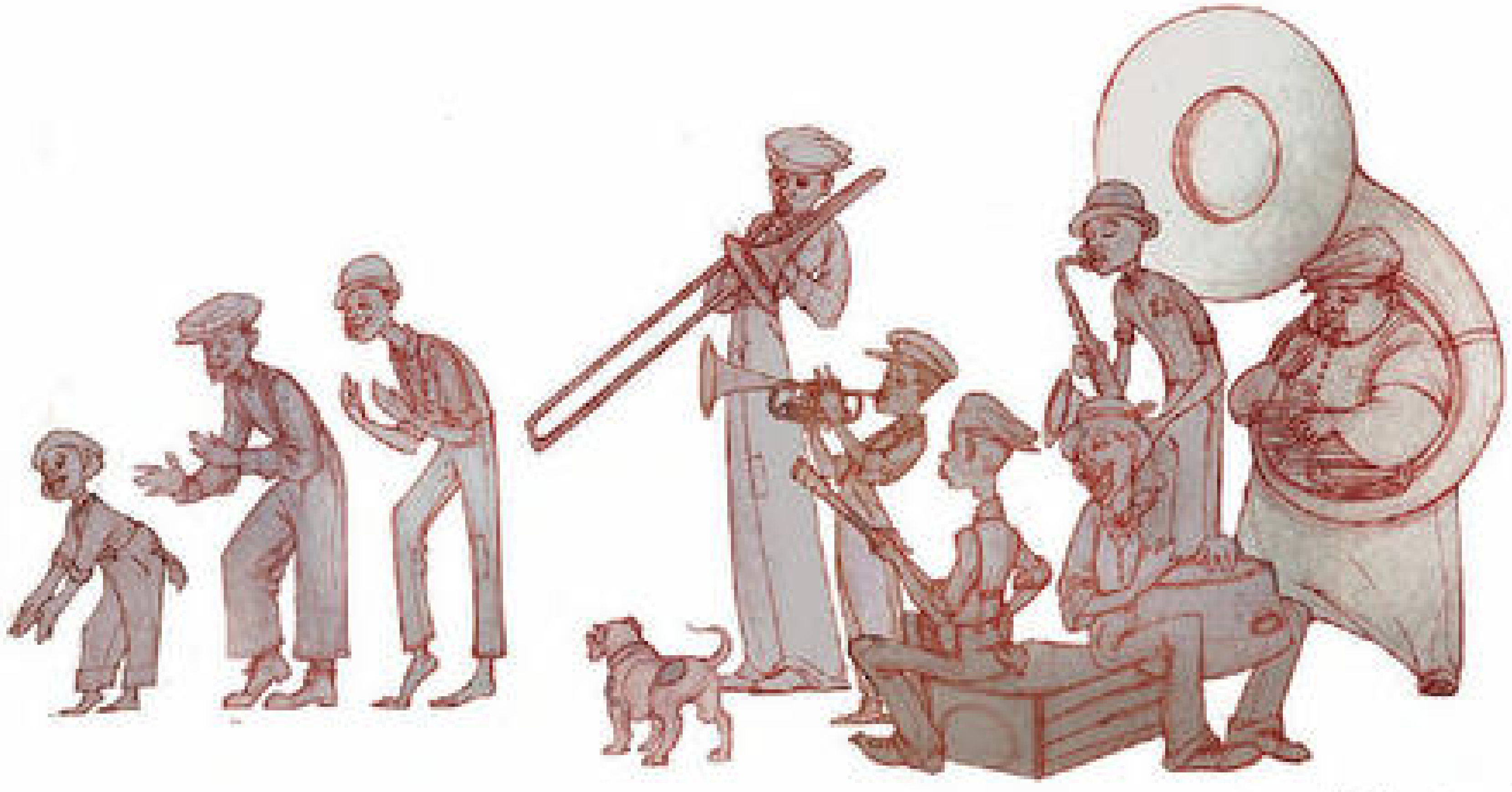
FOREWORD

A little backstory: In February 2006, John Lasseter and Ed Catmull, the visionaries of Pixar, arrived in Burbank, California, eager to revitalize the lifeblood of Walt Disney Animation. As they scoured the development vaults, they discovered that Disney had on more than one occasion explored adapting the classic fairytale "The Frog Prince." Coincidentally, Pixar had also tinkered with the same story. John and Ed invited us to take a look at the stalled explorations. We did, focusing in on New Orleans as our setting and adding our own story and character ideas as well. That March we pitched our version to John and Ed as a hand-drawn feature (a form that had fallen on hard times of late), and a musical no less, featuring an African American heroine, set in the Jazz Age.

John and Ed were highly enthusiastic about our "take." John saw the story as a wonderful opportunity to reacquaint the public with hand-drawn animation, an art form he loved, and to literally draw upon New Orleans, his favorite city in America. But he had a mandate. Before writing our script, we had to go down and experience the city firsthand (something neither of us had done). So off we flew, with Maggie Malone, our story development partner, and Armand "Dobie" Baltazar, a talented designer, in tow. And of course, like so many do, we fell in love with this amazing city.

We soaked up waves of toe-tapping music at Jazz Fest ranging from jaunty zydeco and swingin' Dixieland to stirring gospel. We prowled the French Quarter and had our fortunes told by a Tarot card reader in Jackson Square. We had our own personal tour of the Garden Disrict and the Ninth Ward by the salty raconteur Coleen Salley. We haunted cemeteries and hovered in voodoo shops with priestess Ava Kay Jones. We got up close and personal with some toothy gators in the bayou, courtesy of Reggie, our Cajun swamp guide. And we savored incredible, mouthwatering meals everywhere we went. We discovered that gumbo is not only a popular food in New Orleans, it is also a kind of metaphor for the city itself—a rich and diverse collection of cultural ingredients, including French, Spanish, and African, all mixed together to create a wonderfully unique flavor.

It seemed clear that our story should be a kind of gumbo as well, mixing ingredients of the traditional Disney fairy tale with the rich fabric of this incredible location. As we started our script, we also began a process called visual development, where all kinds of ideas involving story, business, settings, and characters are explored in numerous drawings and paintings. And as in any good gumbo, many of these ingredients made their way into our



Armand Baltazar | *graphite*

pot (script). So it was that our villain Dr. Facilier, the "shadow man," got a shadow with a life of its own, courtesy of the wildly inventive Sue Nichols. Tom Ellery's gag drawing of Louis the alligator "passing" as a human among the costumed Mardi Gras revelers became a major plot point. Mama Odie, our benevolent Voodoo Queen, started viewing her magical visions in Armand Baltazar's bathtub of gumbo (even as a drawing by Daniel Chong prompted her blindness). Soon after, when talented writer Rob Edwards joined the mix, he brought his own set of spices along with numerous clever comedic touches. And on and on.

The next February, we returned to New Orleans with our key creative leaders: Ian Gooding, our amazing art director; James Aaron Finch, prolific production designer; Don Hall, stalwart story head; incisive editor Jeff Draheim; Rasoul Azadani, our fiery head of layout (cinematographer); extraordinary effects supervisor Marlon West; and our perspicacious producer Peter Del Vecho; all shepherded by our own New Orleans descendant Shanda Williamson. They filled numerous photo albums and sketchbooks with imagery cascading from every corner of the Crescent City. We even got to ride a float in Mardi Gras and see that kaleidoscopic spectacle from the inside out. Later, along with John Lasseter, we rumbled down St. Charles Avenue in our own private streetcar. We joined renowned songwriter Randy Newman in the heart of the city as we recorded the distinctive purr of cool cat and New Orleans icon Dr. John. We dined on a scrumptious home-cooked meal by Leah Chase, a living legend and African American powerhouse, who shared her inspiring story of developing Dooky Chase, a restaurant that has become a New Orleans landmark.

All these moments, people, places, pictures, and drawings continued to influence our story: tangy ingredients in our own special animation gumbo. This book is only a sampling, but hopefully it gives a taste of the incredible creative mixture concocted in developing a project like this. So pull up a chair and have your appetite good and ready. You're in for a treat, yeah, you right!!

—JOHN MUSKER & RON CLEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

GOLDEN AGES AND CYCLICAL STYLES: A NEW ERA IN ANIMATION

"The only constant is change, continuing change, inevitable change, that is the dominant factor in society today. No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be."
—ISAAC ASIMOV

Eight Decades of Constant Change

Walt Disney Animation Studios is the oldest existing animation studio in the world. Although such a fact might superficially indicate deep roots and immovable stability, the eight-decade history of Disney Animation has been one of cycles: historic achievements and crushing routs, artistic triumphs and creative drought. Most of the canon of Disney animated features have become beloved classics, but such enduring success has not been uncomplicated or painless.

Commitment, Innovation, and a Drive to Excellence

Disney Animation has evolved over the years through an ongoing commitment to the art form established by Walt Disney himself. Never content with simple achievements, Walt saw each project as the means to another goal.

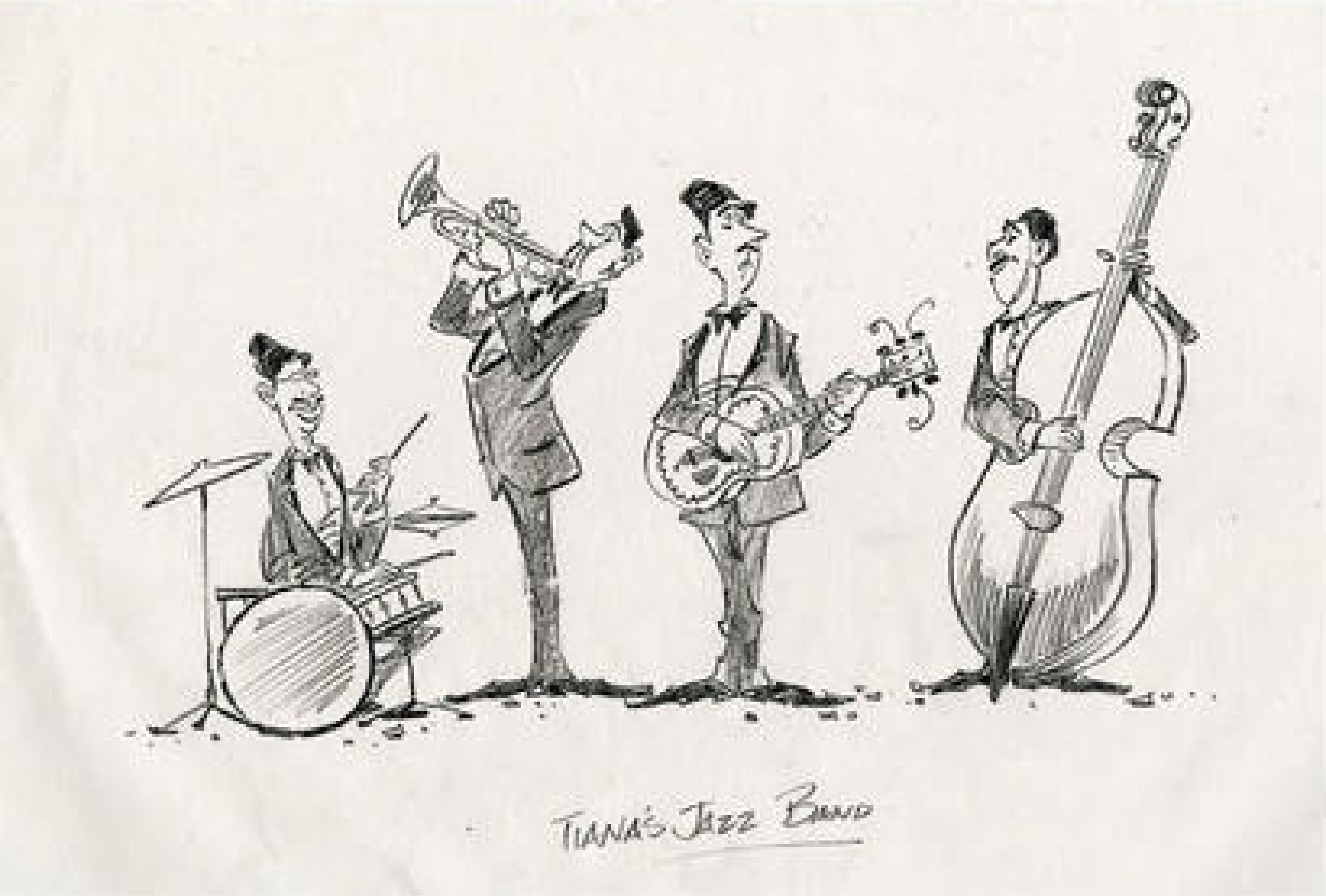
His early short cartoons evolved with the addition of sound; black and white films were supplanted by Technicolor ones; short subjects evolved into the new art form of the animated feature.

Along the way, each technical innovation was met with necessary expansions to the artistic vision, styles, techniques, and methods of presenting animation. Varied artistic styles and expression, and a continuing increase in the sophistication and artistry of the craft, worked hand in hand with advancing technology.

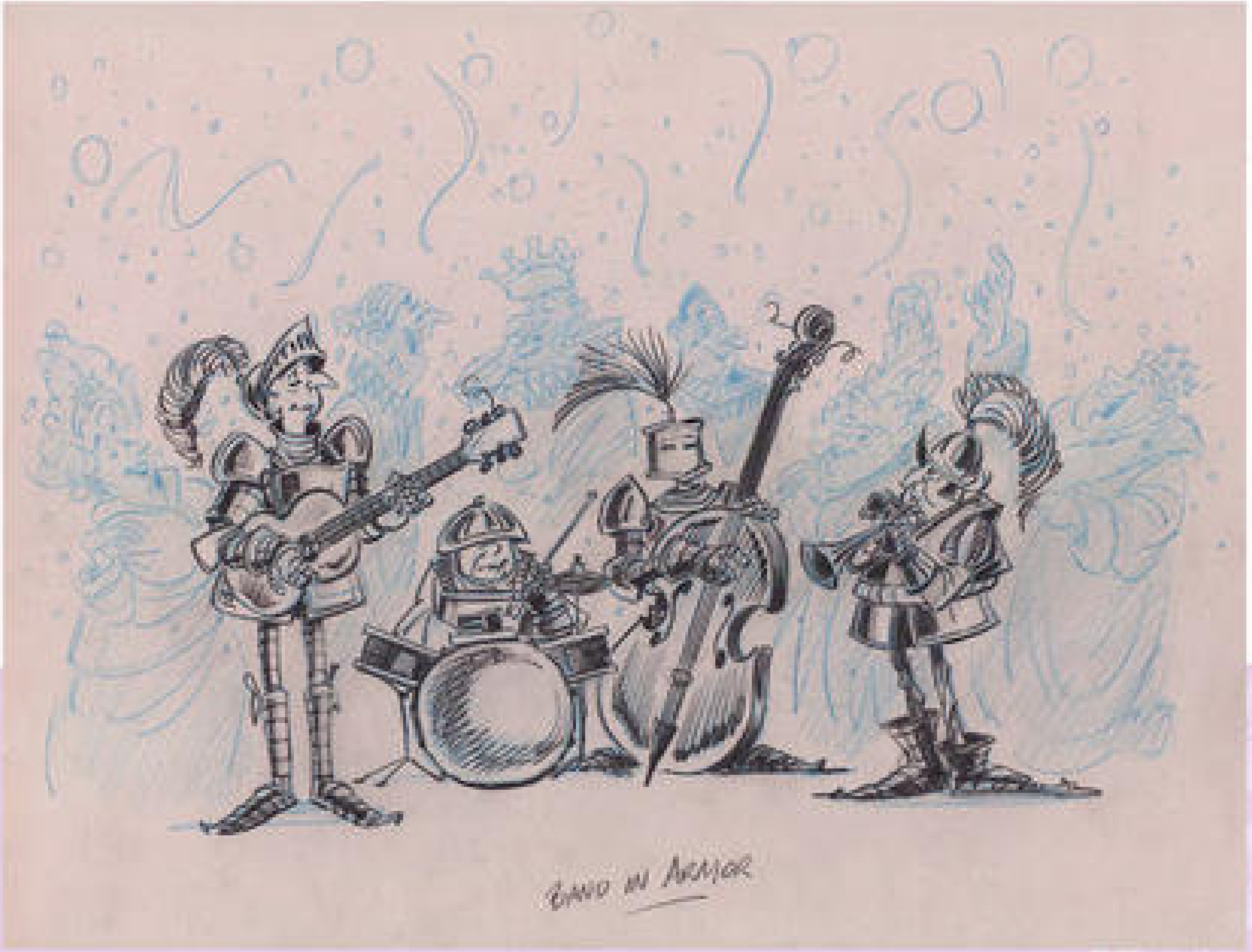
The animation performances likewise evolved, growing from crudely drawn series of loosely connected gags to rich and nuanced performances as affecting and meaningful to audiences as those of live actors in great screen roles. "I take great pride in the artistic development of cartoons," Walt said. "Our characters are made to go through emotions which a few short years ago would have seemed impossible to secure with a cartoon character. Some of the action produced in the finished cartoon of today is more graceful than anything possible for a human to do." Indeed, Walt often referred to animators as "actors with a pencil."

The Golden Age of Disney Animation

Over the decades, Disney Animation went through several distinct eras, with creative and commercial ebb and flow based on all manner of factors, both within and outside the studio. A true Golden Age of animation lasted from the earliest short films of the late 1920s through the creation of the feature films *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Pinocchio* (1940), *Fantasia* (1940), and *Bambi* (1942).



Rik Maki | graphite



Rik Maki | graphite

The Second Golden Age of Disney Animation

The Second World War brought about a lethargy in the medium that lasted until a second Golden Age and a succession of popular films including *Cinderella* (1950), *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), *Peter Pan* (1952), *Lady and the Tramp* (1954), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), as well as a variety of unique and inventive short subjects and experimental films. Through the 1960s, although exceptional production design and personality animation continued in Disney films such as *101 Dalmatians* (1961) and *The Jungle Book* (1967), the death of Walt Disney in December 1966 again led to a creative deceleration and a lack of objectives for Disney Animation Studios.

The Third Golden Age of Disney Animation

In the mid-1980s, new management at Disney led to a third Golden Age. Commitment to the art form and encouragement of a new young generation of animators who had trained with Walt's own artists led to a remarkable string of critical and popular successes, among them *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Beauty and the Beast* (1990), *Aladdin* (1992), *The Lion King* (1994), *Hercules* (1997), and *Lilo & Stitch* (2002).

Public appreciation for Disney Animation led to a huge boom in the medium from other studios, and the nascent form of computer animation began to emerge, initially supporting traditional animation, but soon becoming an art form all its own, with computer models replacing the meticulous hand-drawing of the past. Although distinctly a separate style and technique of animation, Disney announced that they would release their last film to use traditional animation, *Home on the Range*, in 2004.

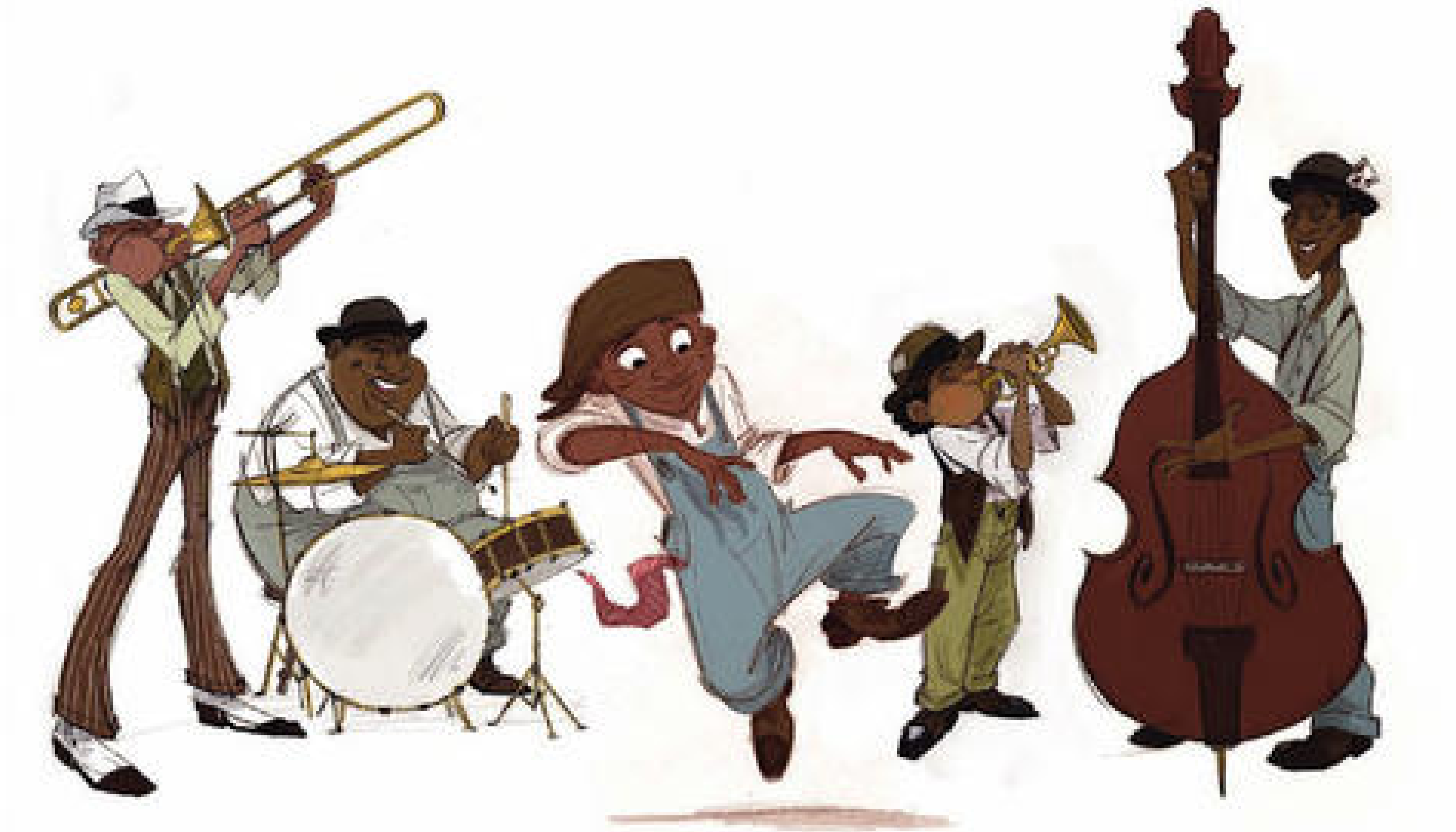
The End of an Era . . .

Although Disney animated films had featured computer-generated effects for many years, including innovative merges of the two forms in films such as *Tarzan* (1999) and *Treasure Planet* (2002), Disney management announced plans to move entirely to computer animation, beginning with *Chicken Little* (2005), and laid off most of the animation department.

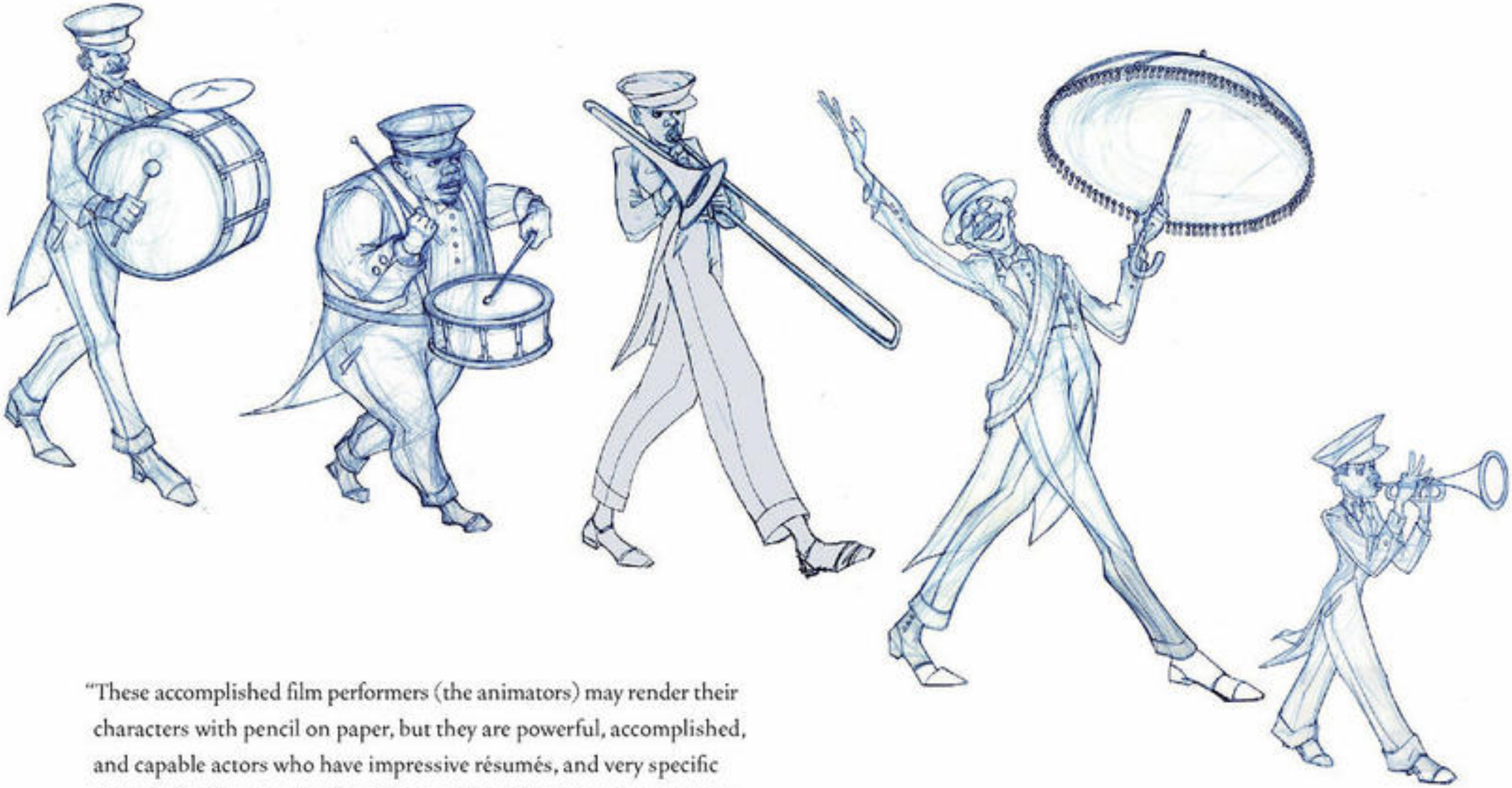
However, after the Disney acquisition of Pixar Animation Studios in early 2006, John Lasseter and Ed Catmull were asked to additionally take on the management of the Walt Disney Animation Studios, and to revive traditional hand-drawn animation.

. . . And a New Beginning

Now the cycle renews, with a few exceptions. A clean start offers the filmmakers an ability to create a production procedure that utilizes all the lessons of the past with the most current methods and techniques. The talent pool for hand-drawn animators has enabled the assembly of one of the most amazing and experienced creative teams in the history of animation. The unqualified support and complete understanding of Disney management has provided an environment of safety and trust, and a commitment to the film project that has the potential to reach into the storied past of Disney and continue an eight-decade legacy for new artists and new audiences.



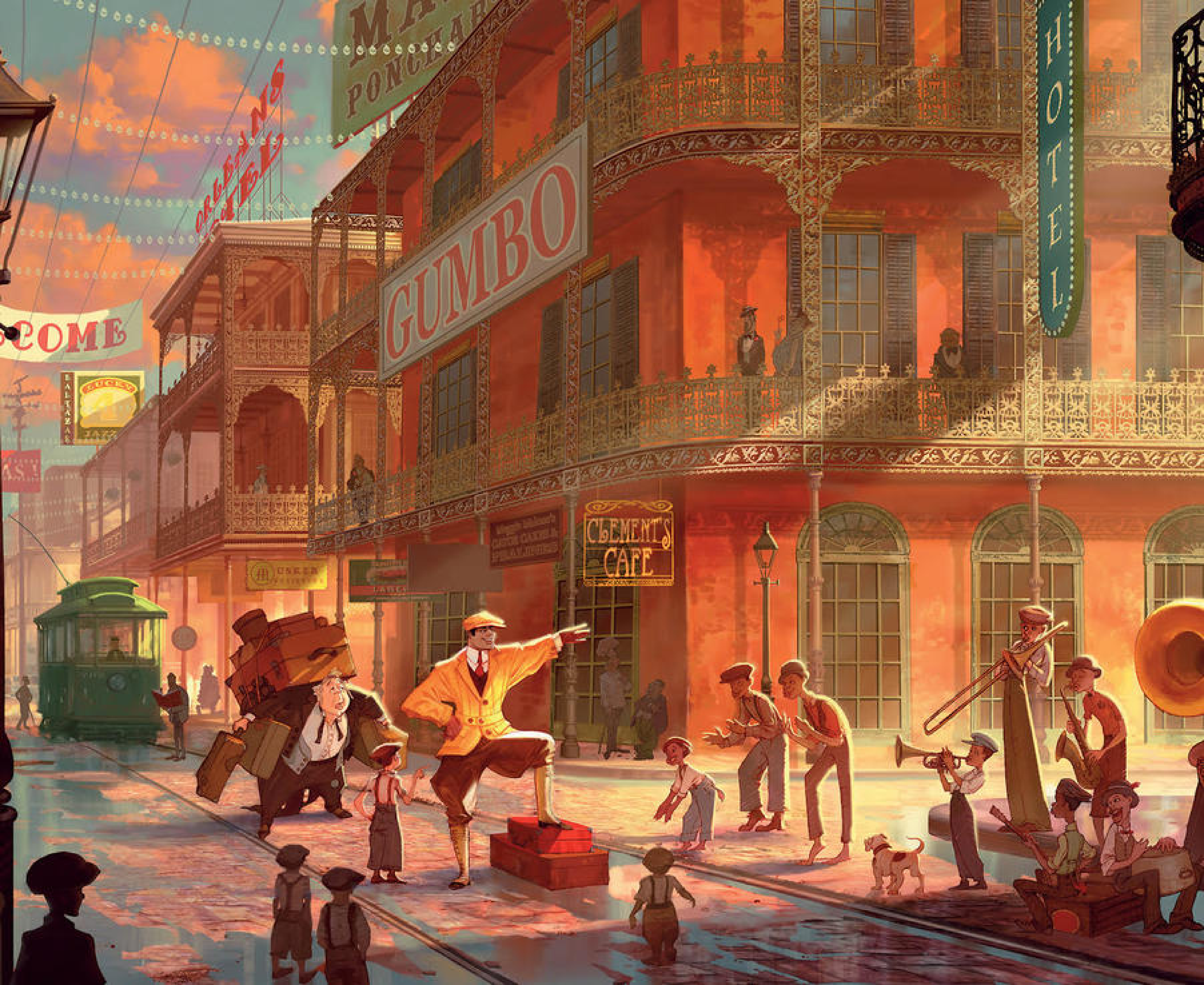
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



Armand Baltazar | graphite

"These accomplished film performers (the animators) may render their characters with pencil on paper, but they are powerful, accomplished, and capable actors who have impressive résumés, and very specific career paths like any other fine film thespians. They are each passionate about the traditions that made Disney animation great. Their skills have not been dampened by time or dulled by working in service of keystroke driven dalliances on CG animated projects. Their collective skills are as impressive, if not more so, than any star-studded mega hit Hollywood could tout. To see these stars back in action, and all together again, is enough to raise the rafters on any multiplex."

—RHETT WICKHAM, LaughingPlace.com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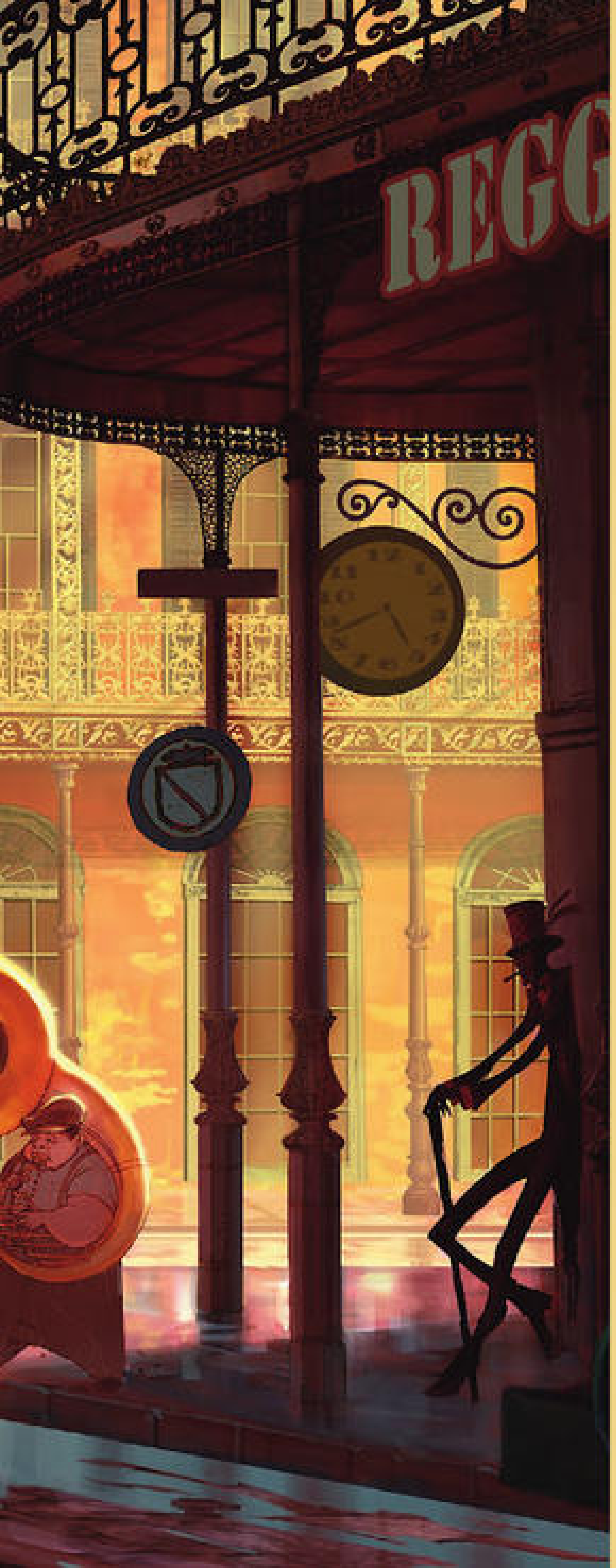


Armand Baltazar | digital

CHAPTER ONE: NEW ORLEANS

"GRAB SOMEBODY AND COME ON DOWN, BRING YOUR PAINTBRUSH, WE'RE PAINTING THE TOWN"

"In New Orleans, you have these buildings that are pretty nicely kept—some of them with ferns growing out of the walls. Things like that make it feel so rich and lush and give you a sense of presence. It makes you feel like you're there. We were as observant as possible. And we took thousands of pictures of little tiny details, just to make sure that we were really getting all the windows right and all the brackets that hold them, the balconies and the brick patterns in the sidewalks, the ferns growing out of the cracks. We're trying to get it all, so that you get that feeling that this place is real."
—IAN GOODING, art director

CREATING THE CRESCENT CITY

"New Orleans is a shockingly different place. It's just so different from anywhere else in America," says art director Ian Gooding. "I think San Francisco has a lot of character and New York is certainly, undeniably full of New York character. But if you blindfolded someone and put them on a plane that landed in New Orleans, and they'd never been there, you could tell them they were in another country—and they'd probably believe you."

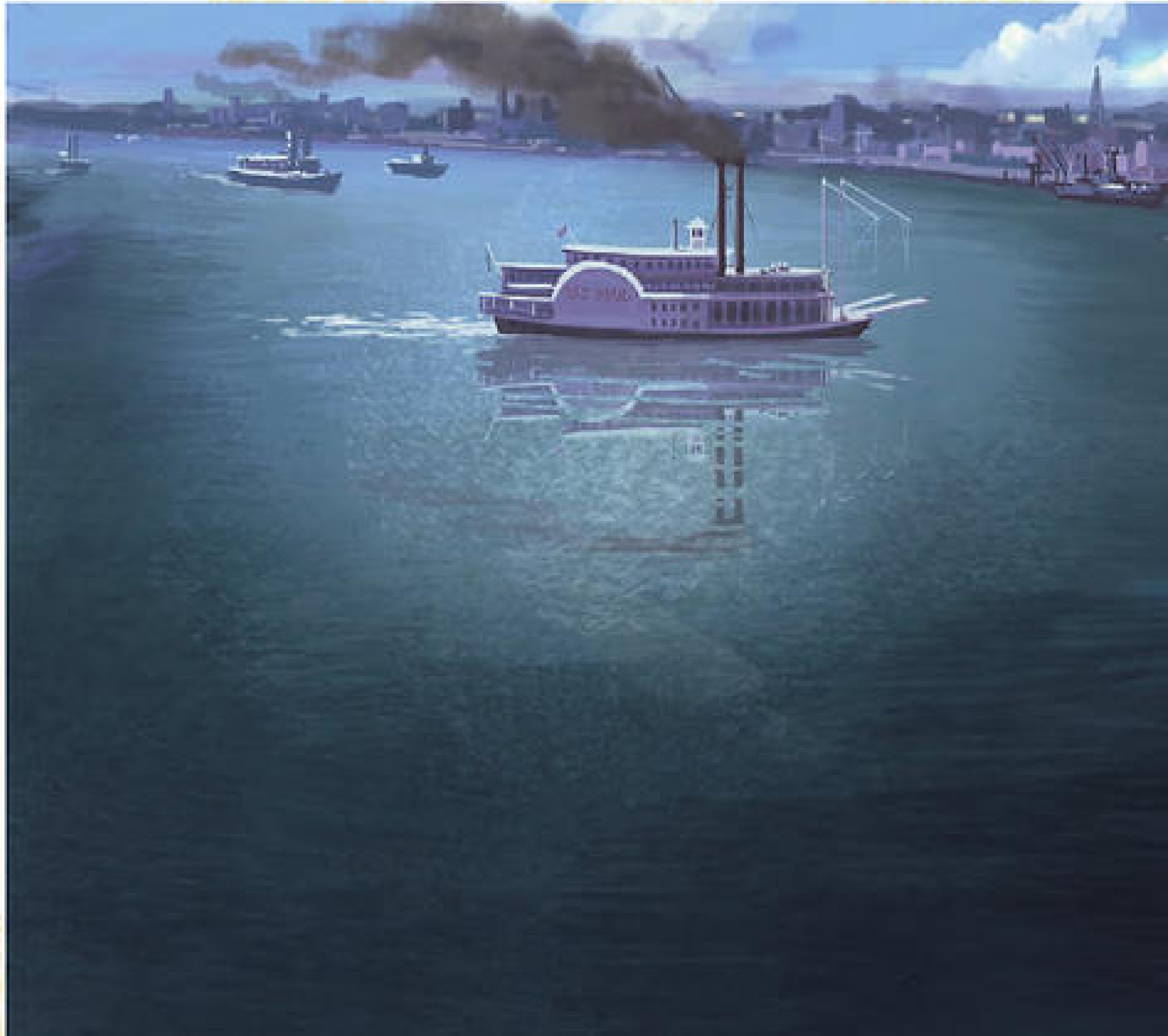
A hundred and twenty miles from the Gulf of Mexico on a crescent-shaped bend in the Mississippi River is a moody city full of history and mystery, of music and magic. Founded by the French, seceded to the Spanish, it is a city rich with African and West Indian influences, a vein of Roman Catholicism, and the fusion of worldwide culture found in a seaport city. Behind it all is a certain transience based on the nature of the residents' livelihood.

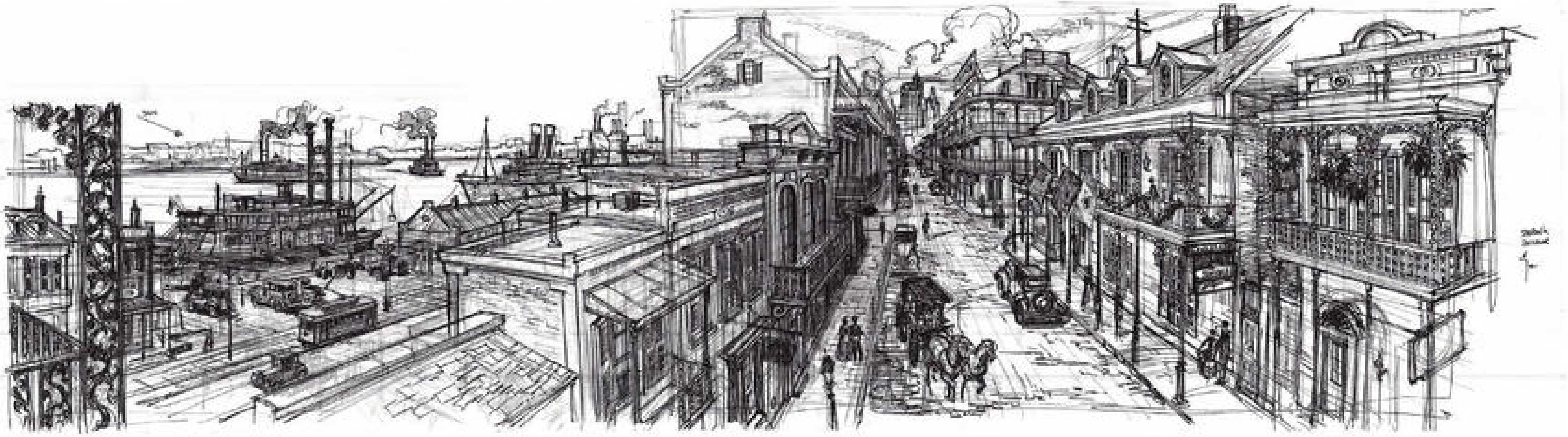
A robust immigrant population in the early twentieth century only added to the abundance and texture of this already rich and unique environment. Oceangoing trade nurtured the development of early jazz music, the legalized vice of Storyville, the artistic ferment of the French Quarter (*Vieux Carré*), and even some of the earliest organized efforts in the historic preservation movement.

Within this diverse and storied locale were all the elements and resources for fantasy and fable.

It almost raises the question, why hadn't Disney done it before?

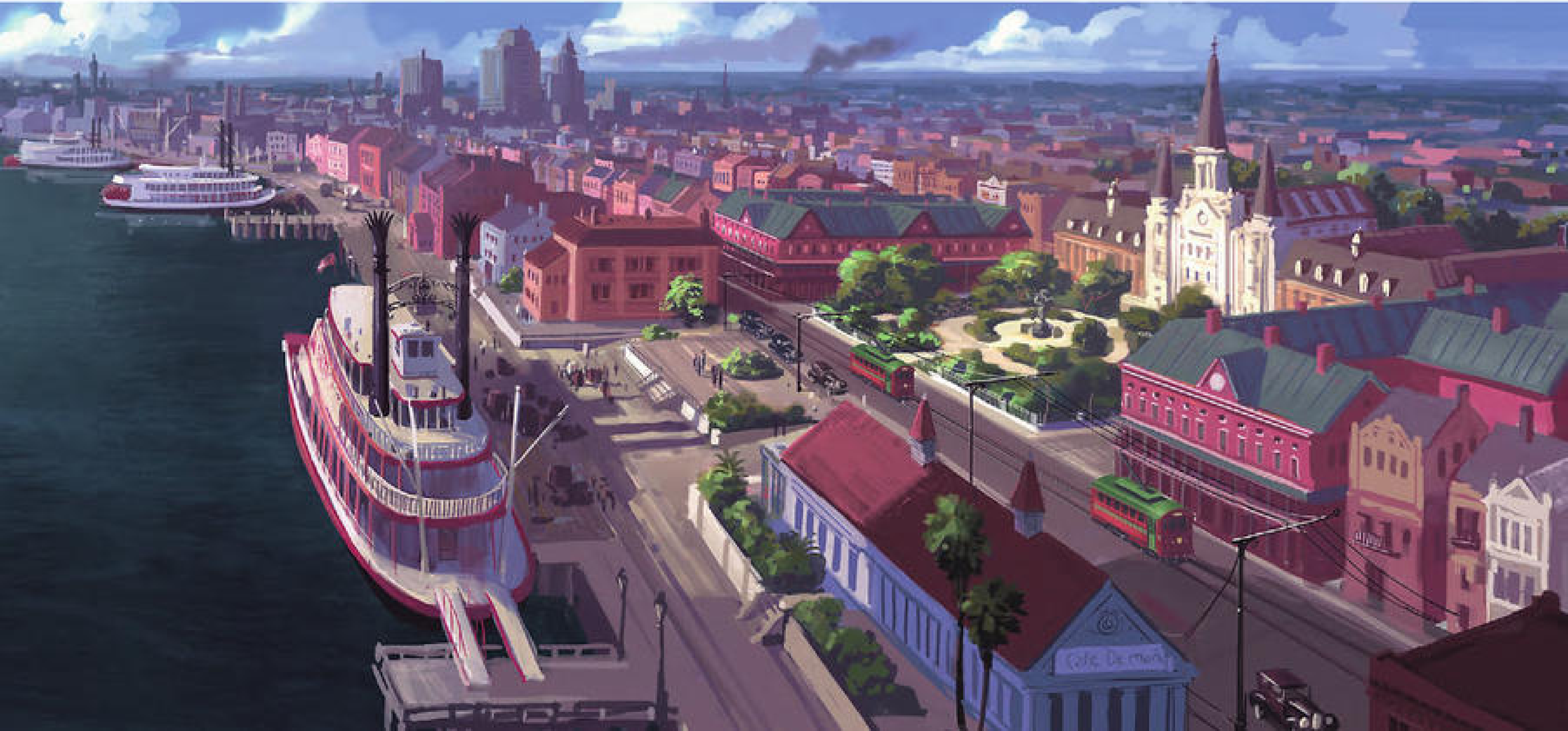
> "You couldn't have a better setting for an American fairy tale. They have their own thing happening in New Orleans. It's an American city; it's a European city. The food is great, the music is good. It's just got so much."
> —MARLON WEST, head of Effects Animation





James Aaron Finch | ink pen

James Aaron Finch | digital

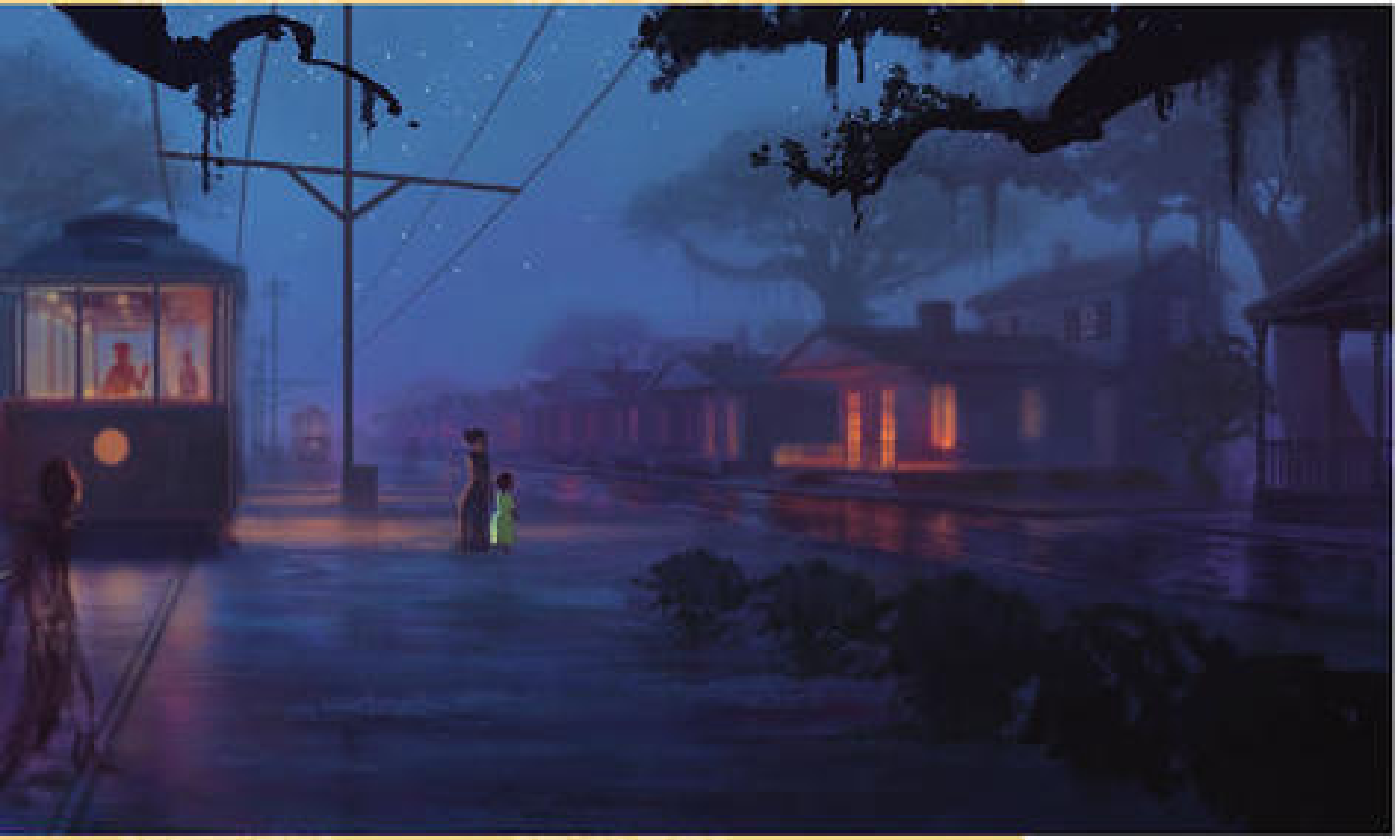


Cafe Du Monde

EVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

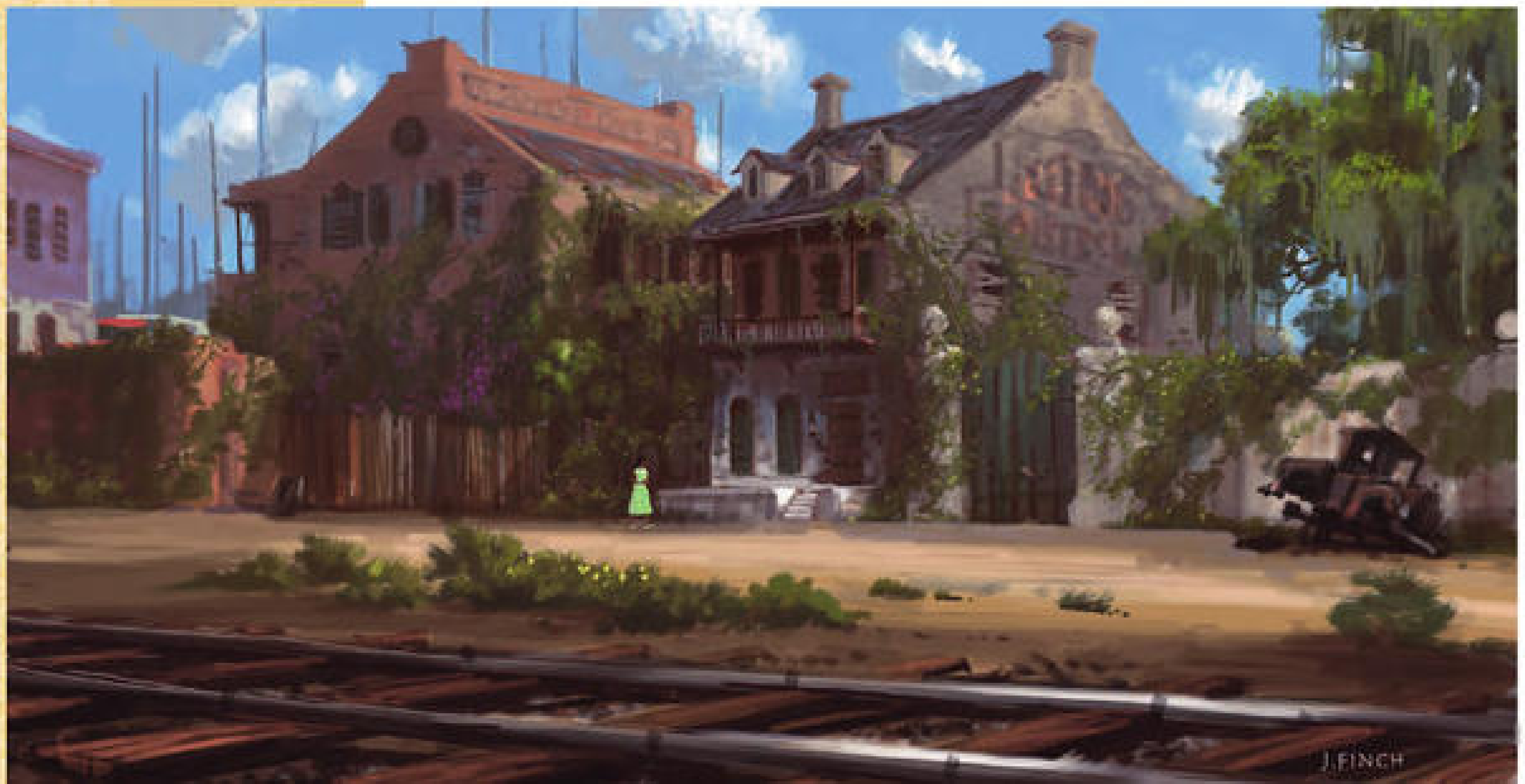
At the time of *The Little Mermaid* and *Beauty and the Beast*, a version of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale "The Frog Prince" was in development. Later on, Eric Goldberg explored a tonally different modern telling of the tale. Completely unknown to (and independent of) the Disney Animation Studios, Pixar was struggling to develop a version of "The Frog Prince" originally set in Chicago in the 30s. When the idea finally landed back at the Walt Disney Animation Studios, all of the various versions were reviewed and parsed by directors Ron Clements and John Musker. One major characteristic evolved: the 1920s New Orleans setting.

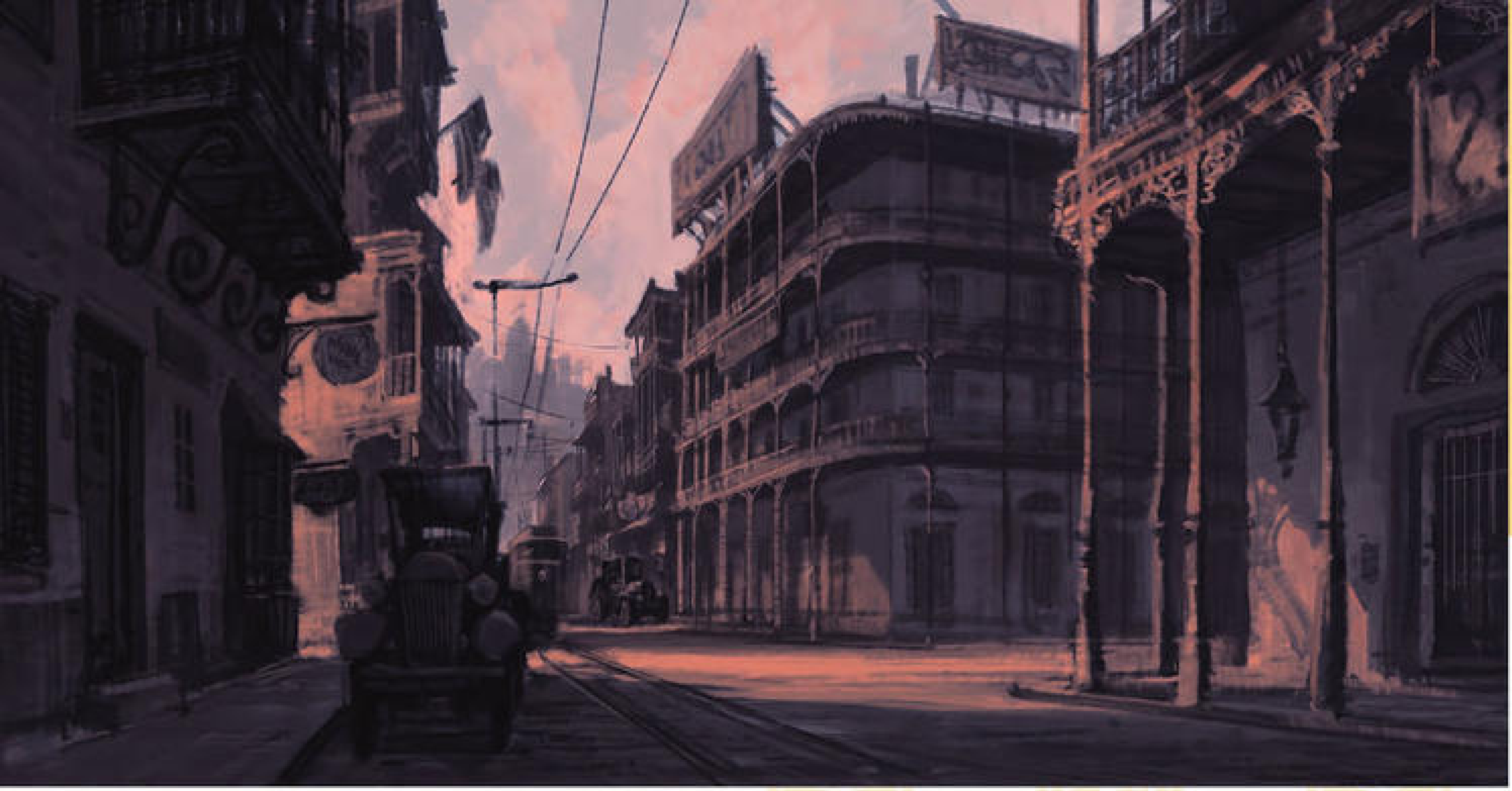
Within the Crescent City itself were varied settings, cultures, events, and histories to inspire the artists and their creations.



Armand Baltazar | digital

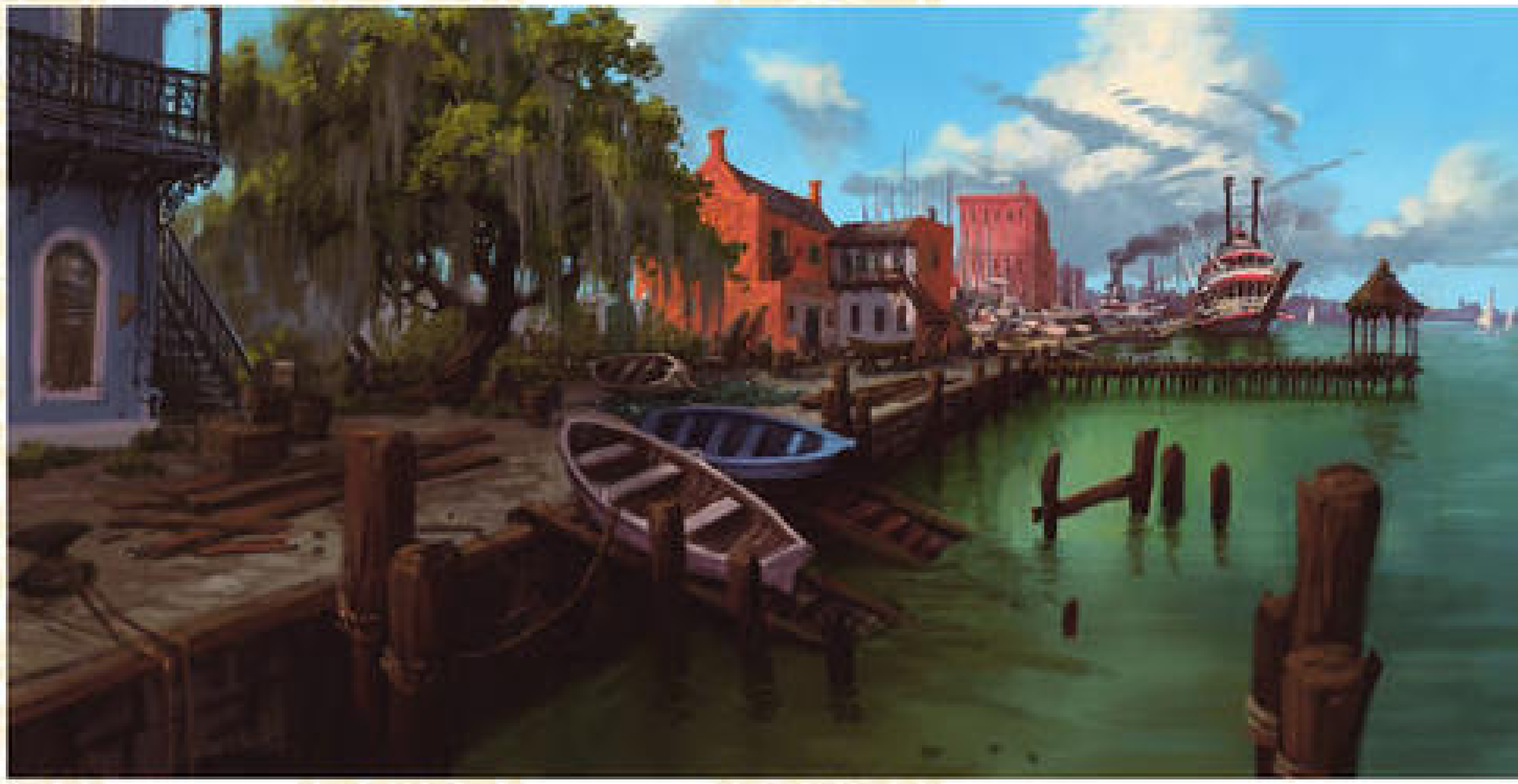
James Aaron Finch | digital





James Aaron Finch | digital

James Aaron Finch | digital



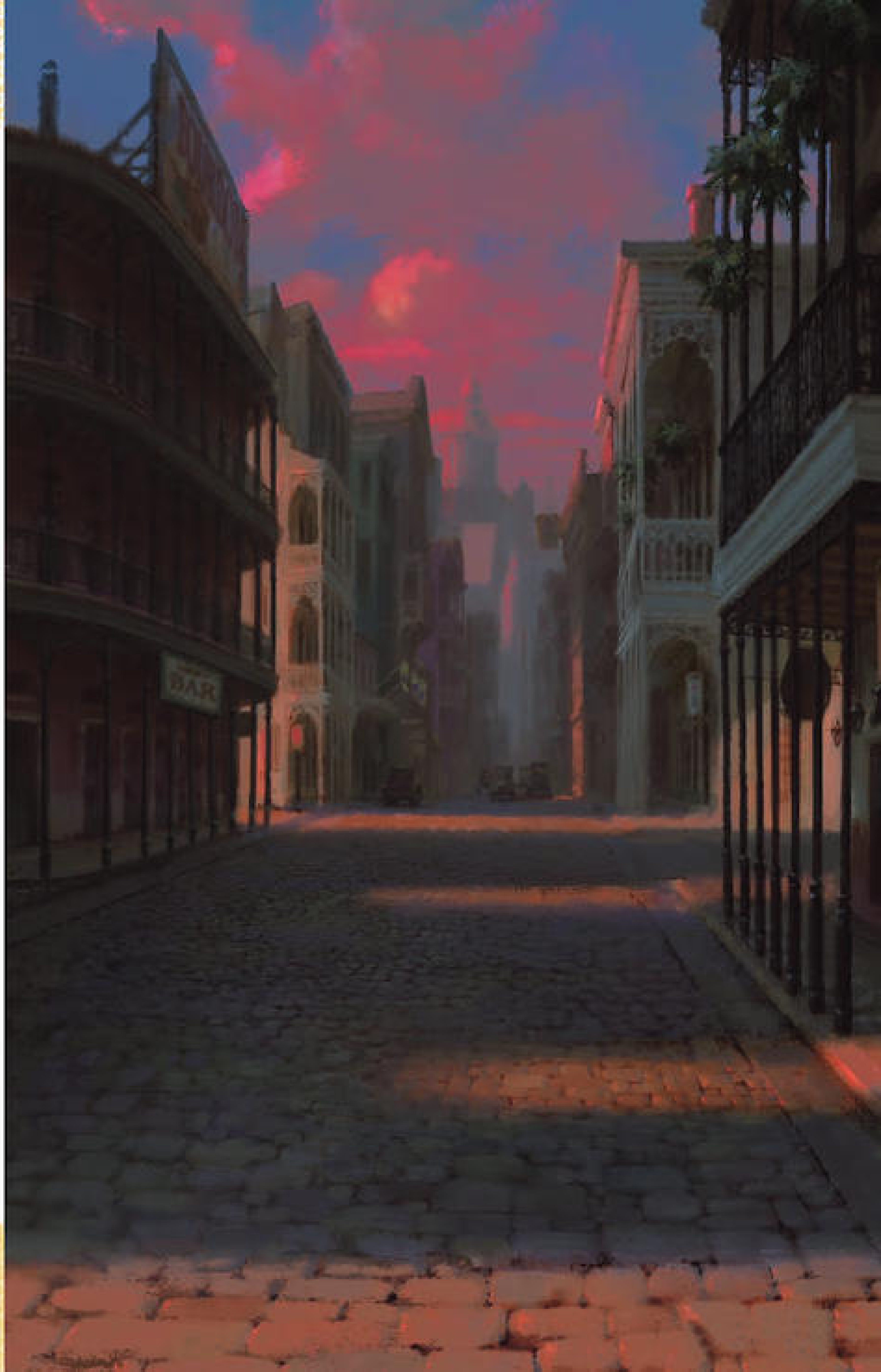
"The architecture, including Art Nouveau and other design prevalent in the 1920s, ornamental elements, even the signage helped to drive us toward a style and in a design direction. Most of all, we were inspired by the sense that it's a real world, but one that has a uniqueness to it, an almost *other*worldly quality."
—JAMES AARON FINCH, production designer

THE FRENCH QUARTER

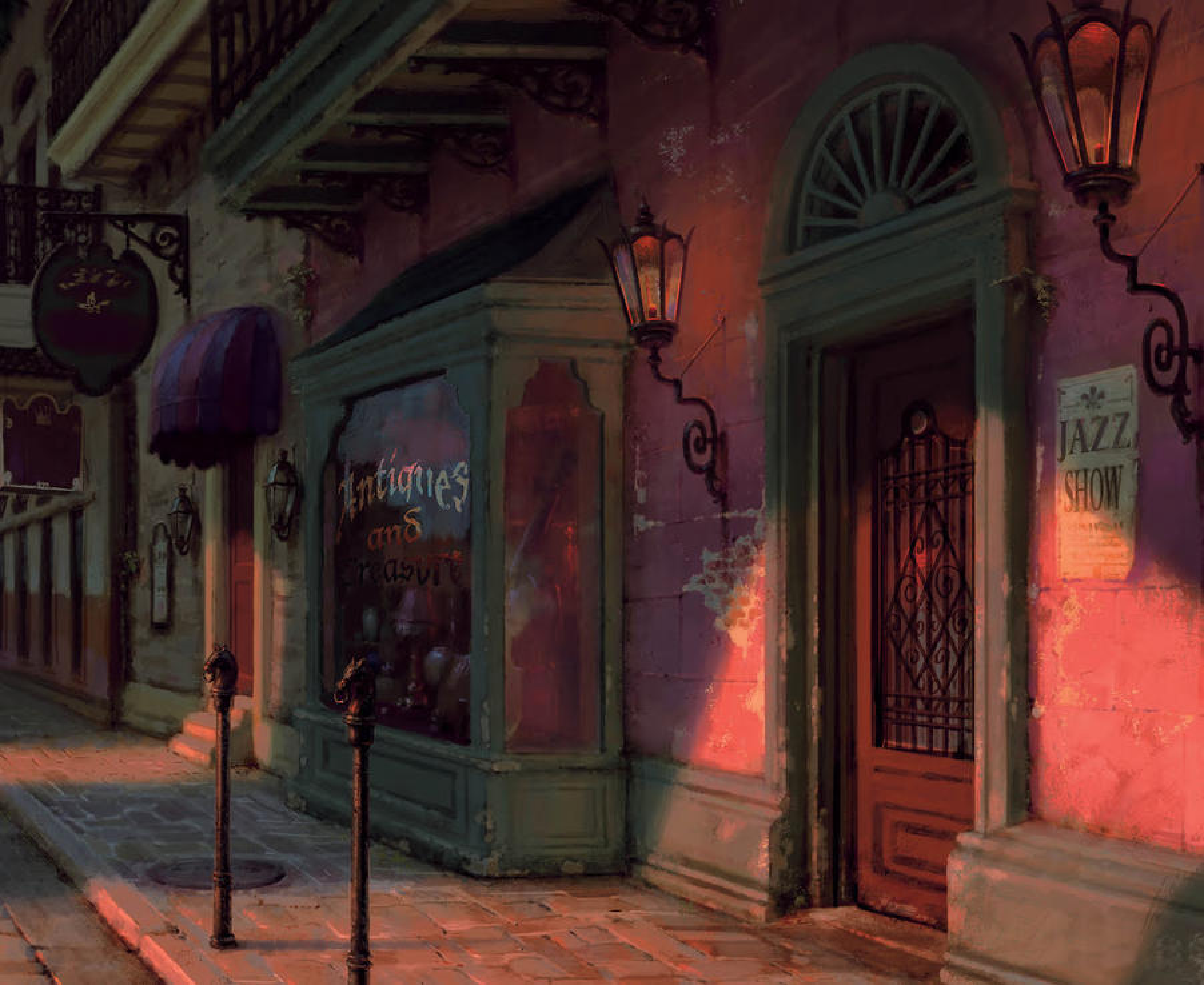
North of broad Canal Street is the picturesque French Quarter (*Vieux Carré*) of the old city. Founded as a military-style grid of seventy squares in 1718 by French Canadian naval officer Jean Baptiste Bienville, it is now one of the best-loved attractions in the American South.

In the heart of the Quarter is Jackson Square (the former *Place d'Armes*). Fronting the square are the 1795 Cabildo (formerly the government building, it now houses the Louisiana State Museum), the 1794 Saint Louis Cathedral (the oldest Catholic cathedral in continual use in the United States), and dozens of impressive and romantic 18th- and 19th-century structures.

Many of the multi-storied French Quarter buildings feature ornate balconies and elaborate cast-iron work, frequently festooned with hanging and potted plants. Most buildings are built with brick or plastered brick and painted in bright colors, and feature window and door shutters for protection against tropical storms. At night, the warm, flickering glow of gas lamps and lanterns lights the cobbled alleys and courtyards, and casts shadows that stimulate the romantic, the imaginative—and the apprehensive.



Ian Gooding | digital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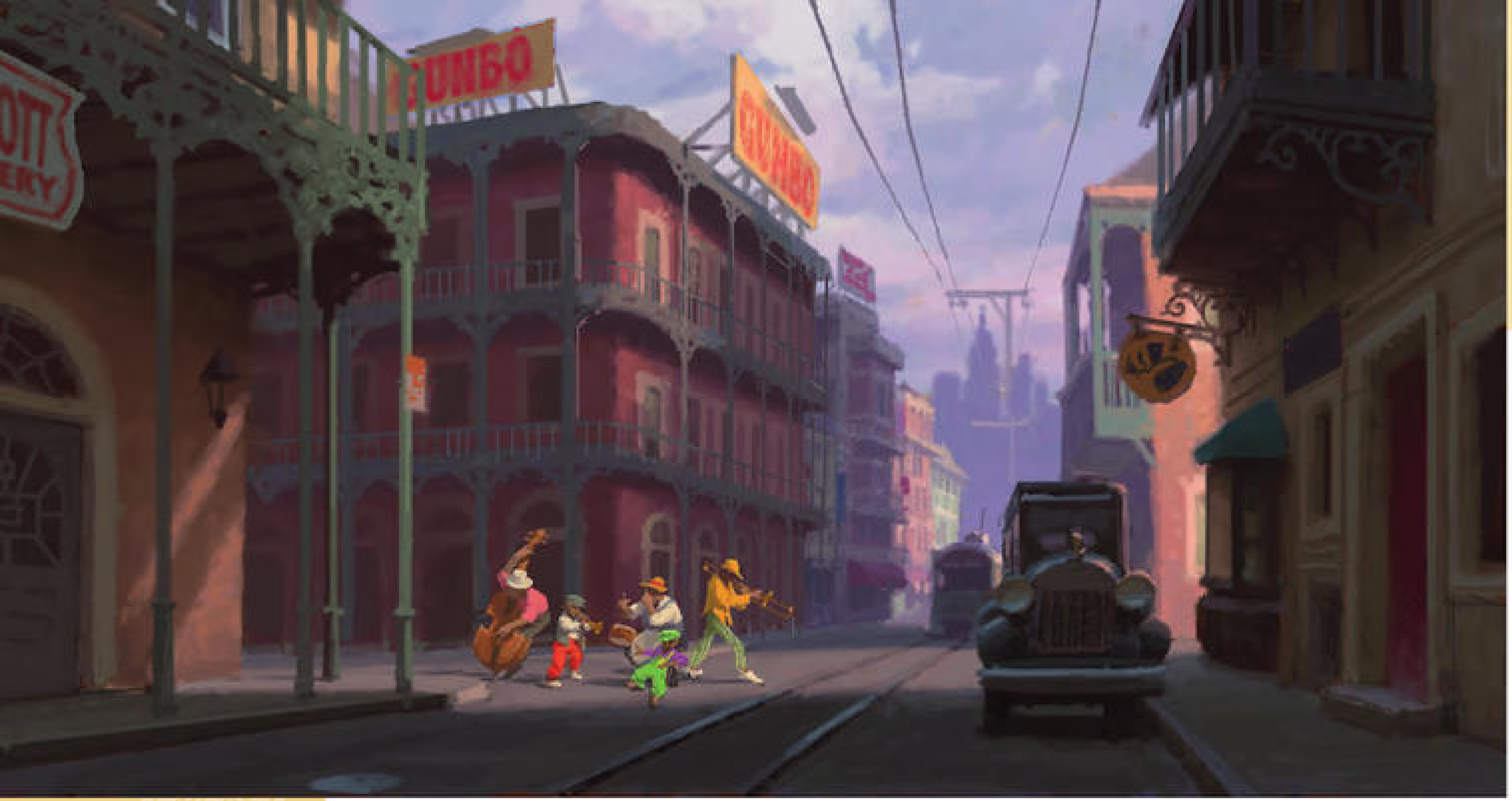
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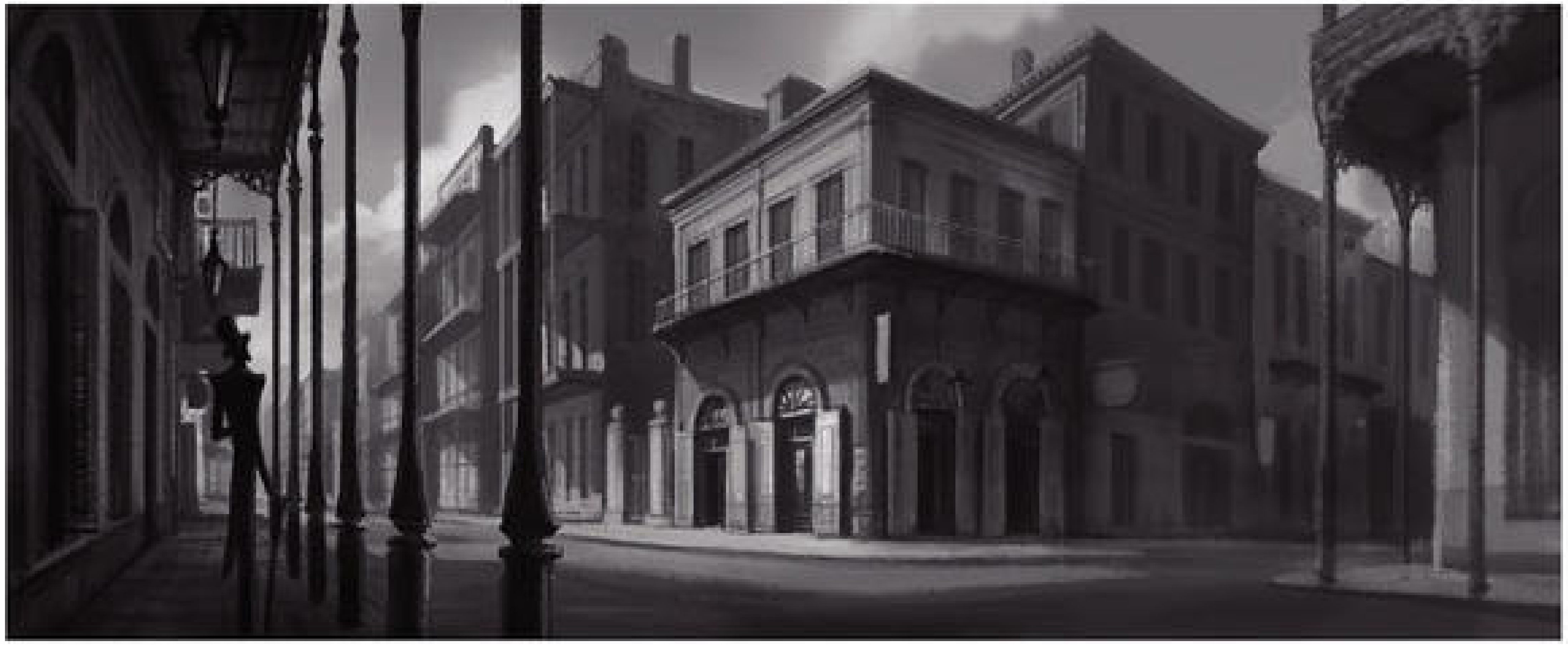
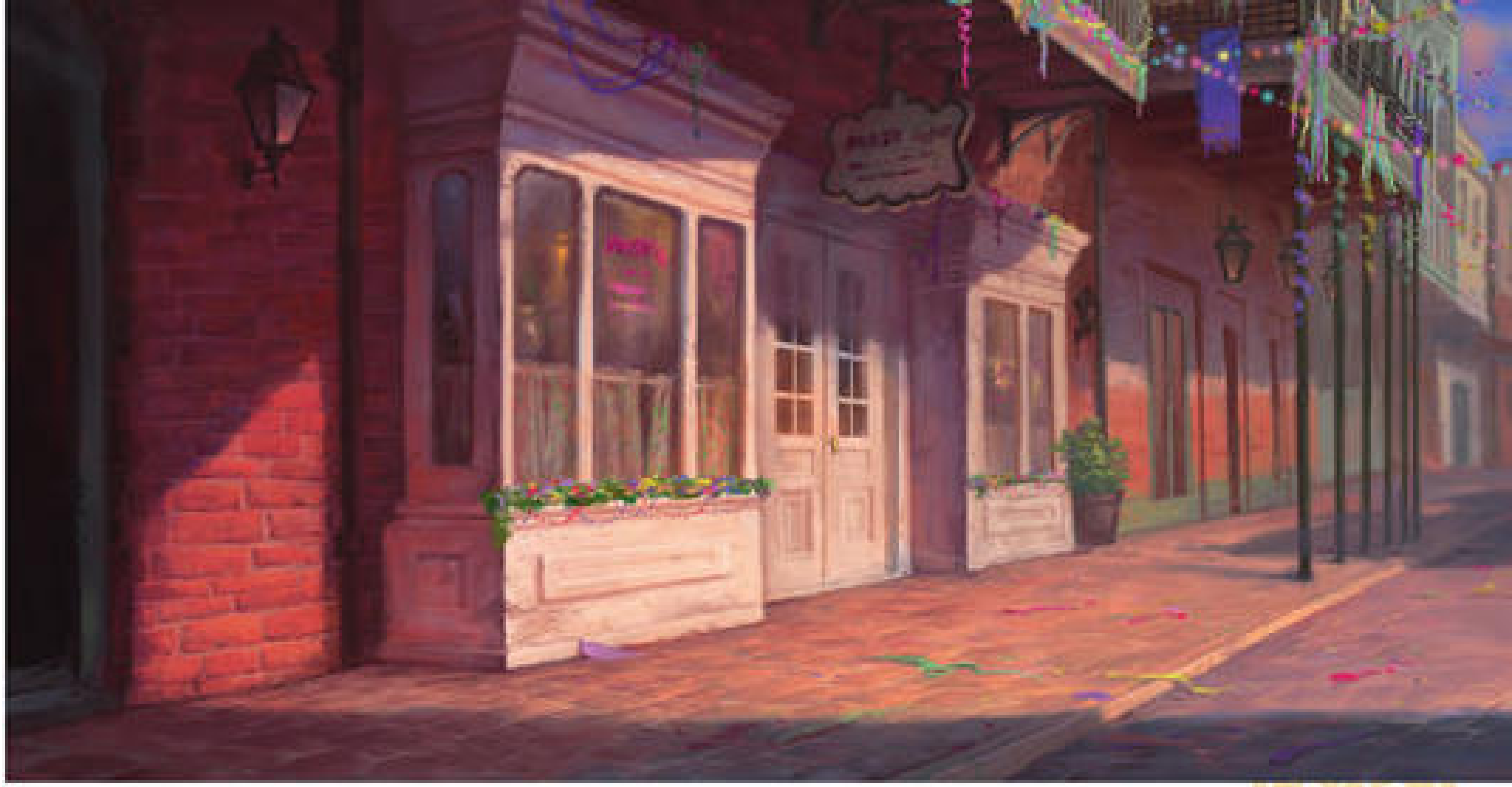
Sai Ping Lok | digital



James Aaron Finch | digital

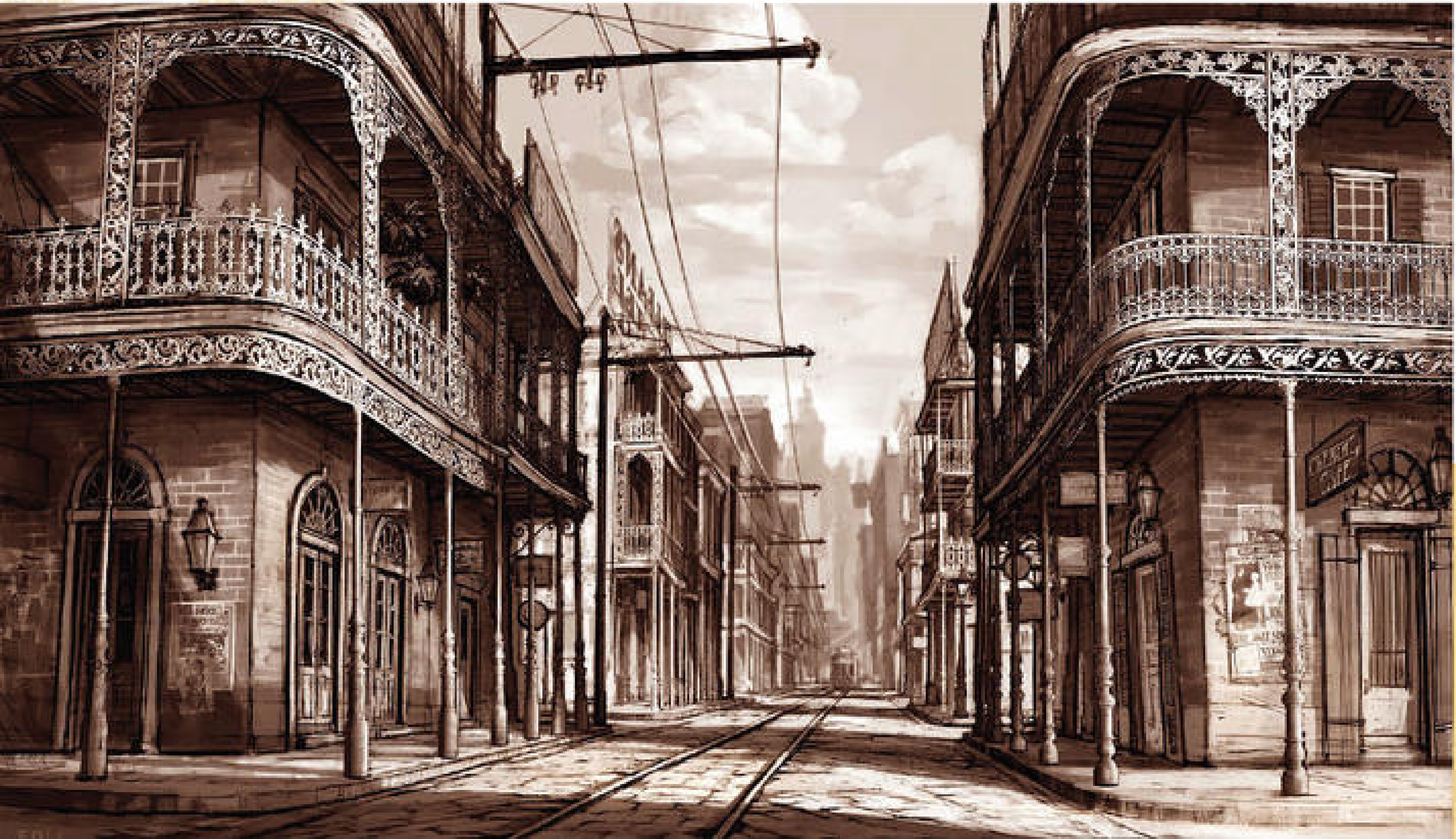
"New Orleans really is emblematic of 'Americana,' in that it's a melting pot of so many varied cultures, and always has been, which gives a flavor to the community and the ethnicity that is integral to the entire environment there. It added a layer of flavor to the visuals that we haven't tapped into before, and I loved it."

—SUE NICHOLS, visual development artist



Sunny Apinchapong | digital

Ed Li | digital



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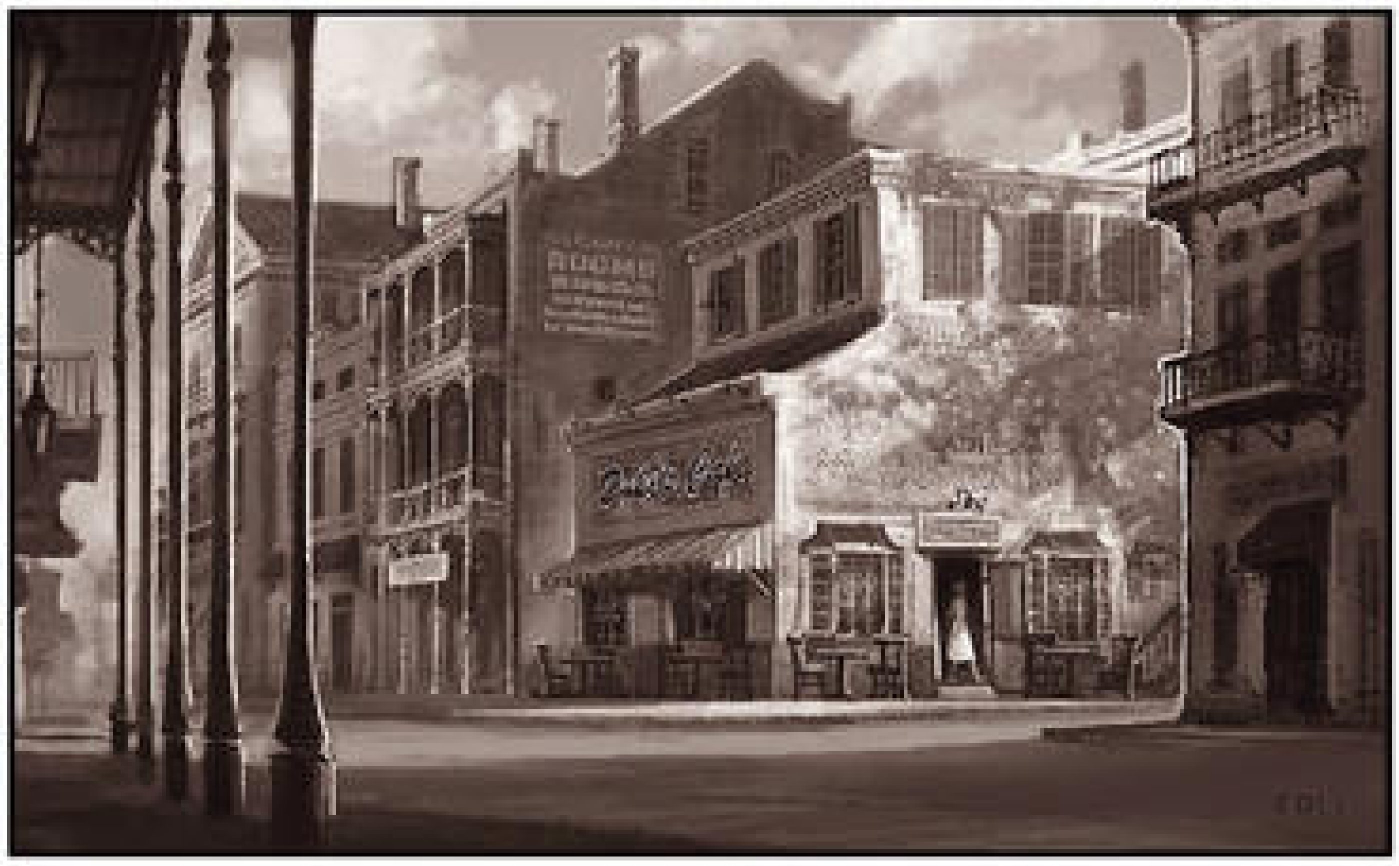
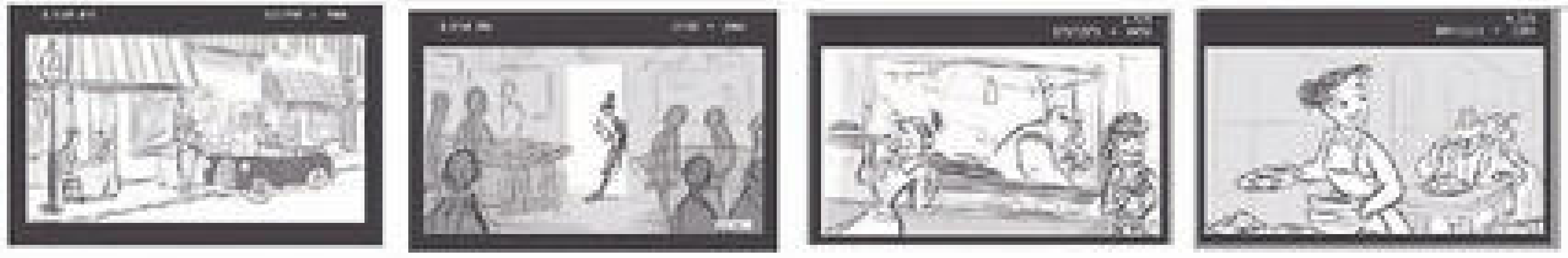
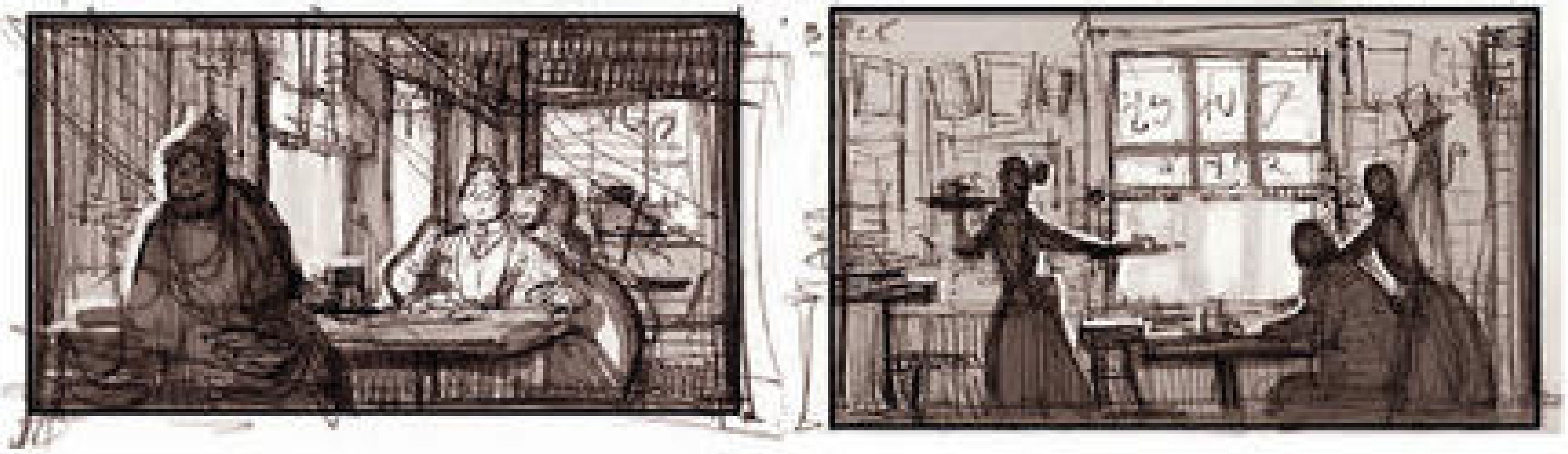


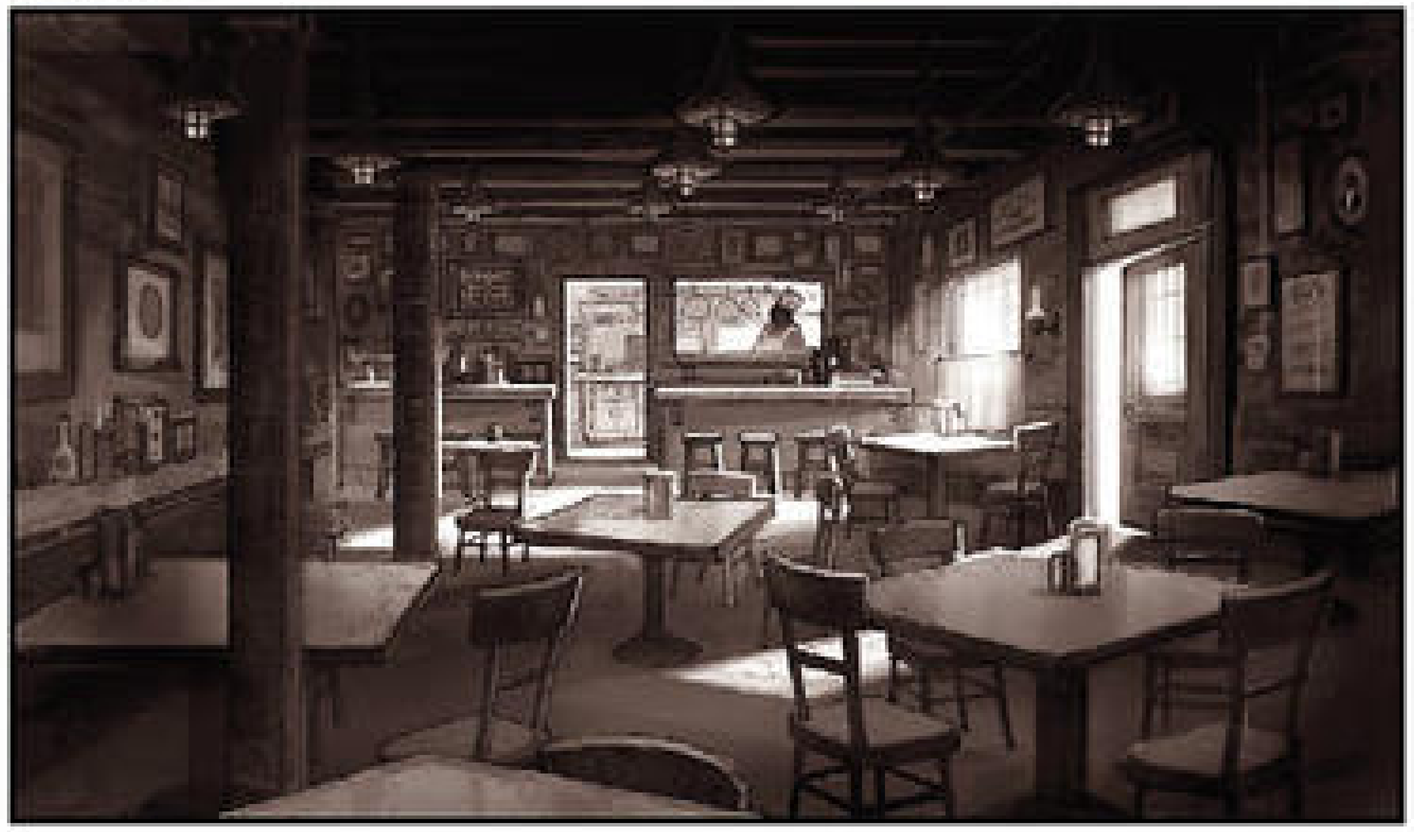
-storyboard references



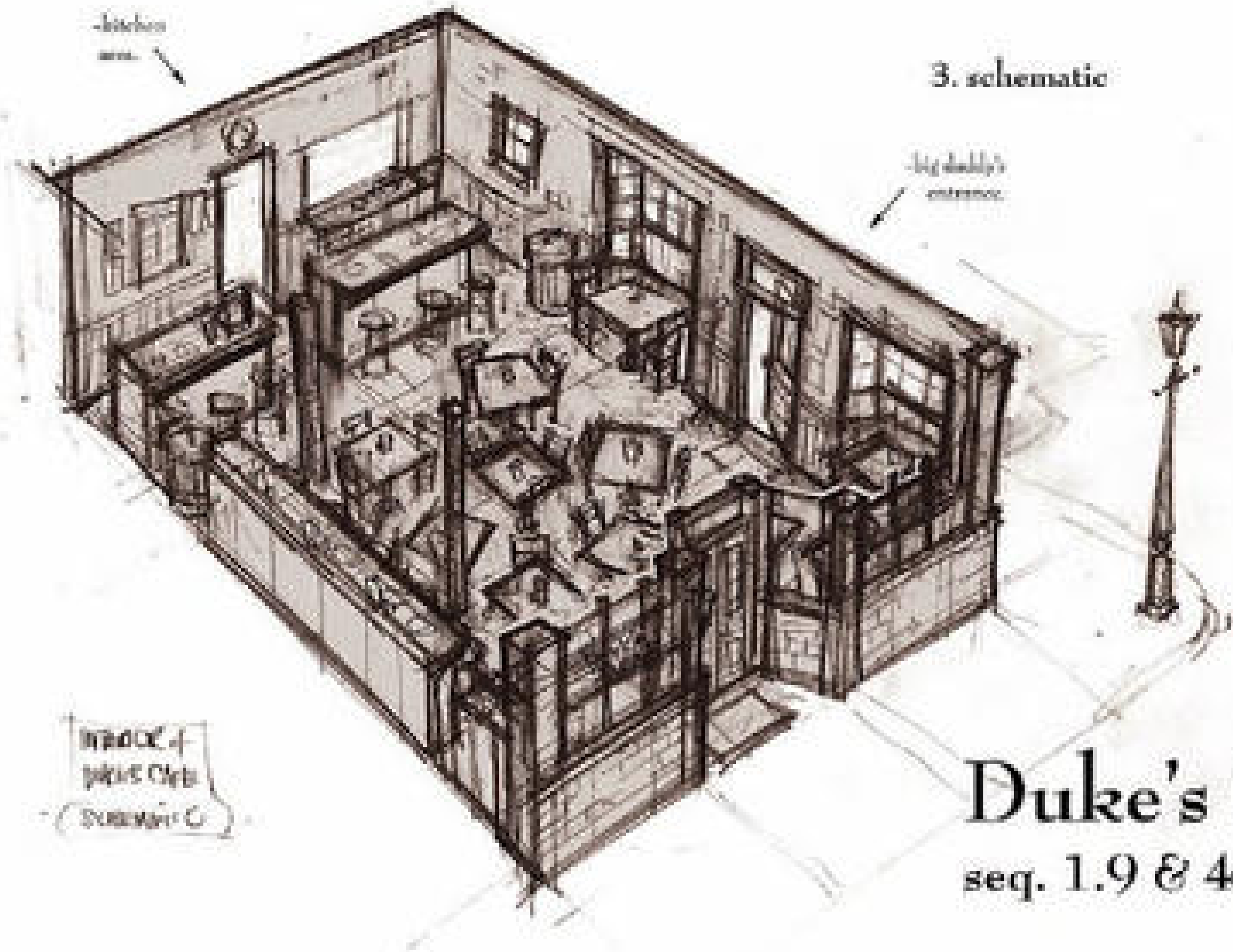
-staging sketches



2. interiors



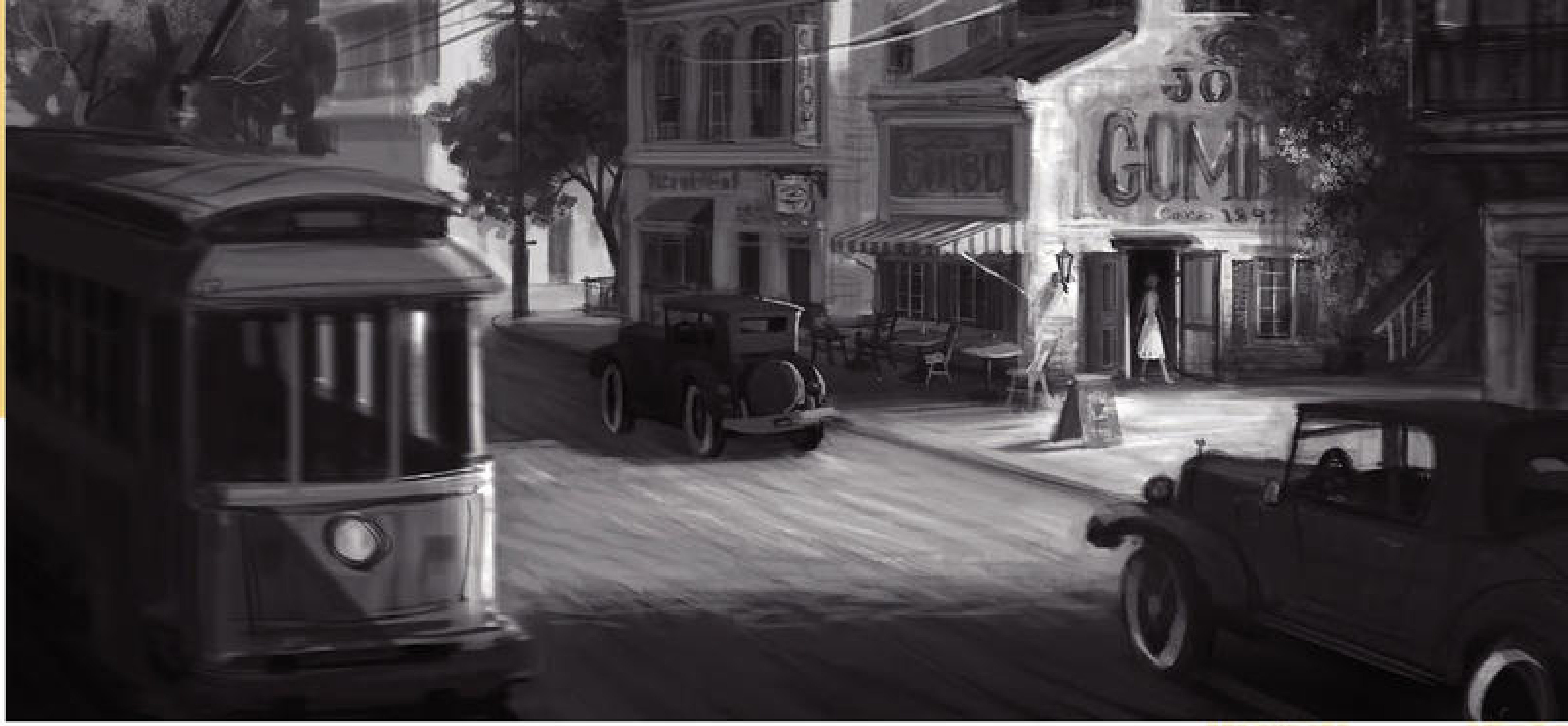
3. schematic


-kitchen area.
-big daddy's entrance.
INSIDE of DUKE'S CAFE SCHEMATIC C

Duke's Cafe

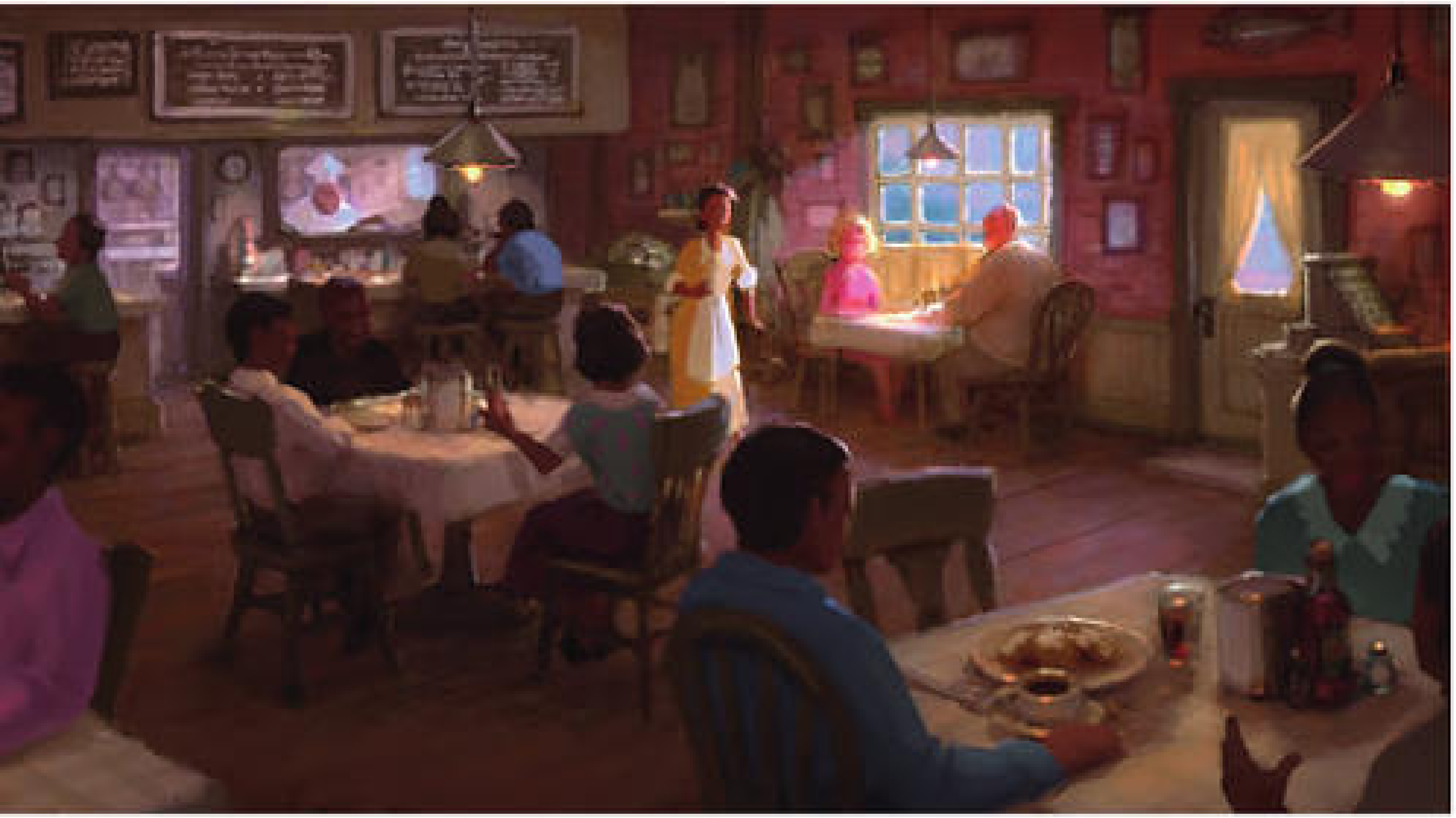
seq. 1.9 & 4.5

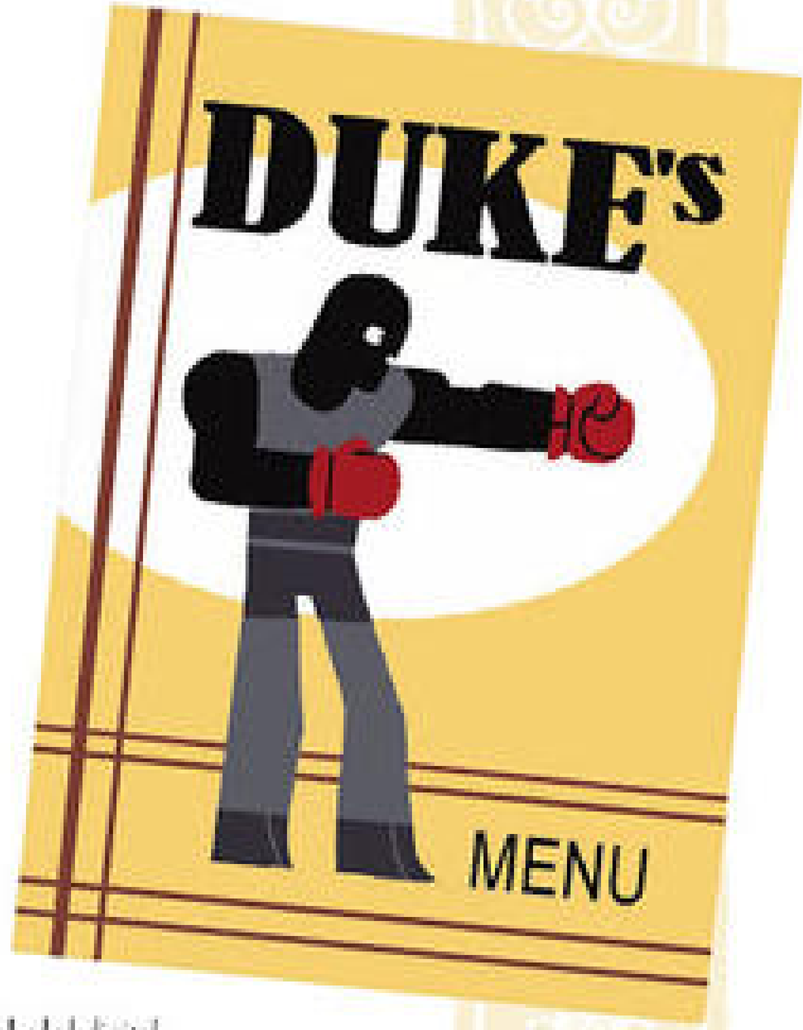
ld li | digital



James Aaron Finch | digital

Ian Gooding, Ed Li | digital





Sue Nichols | digital

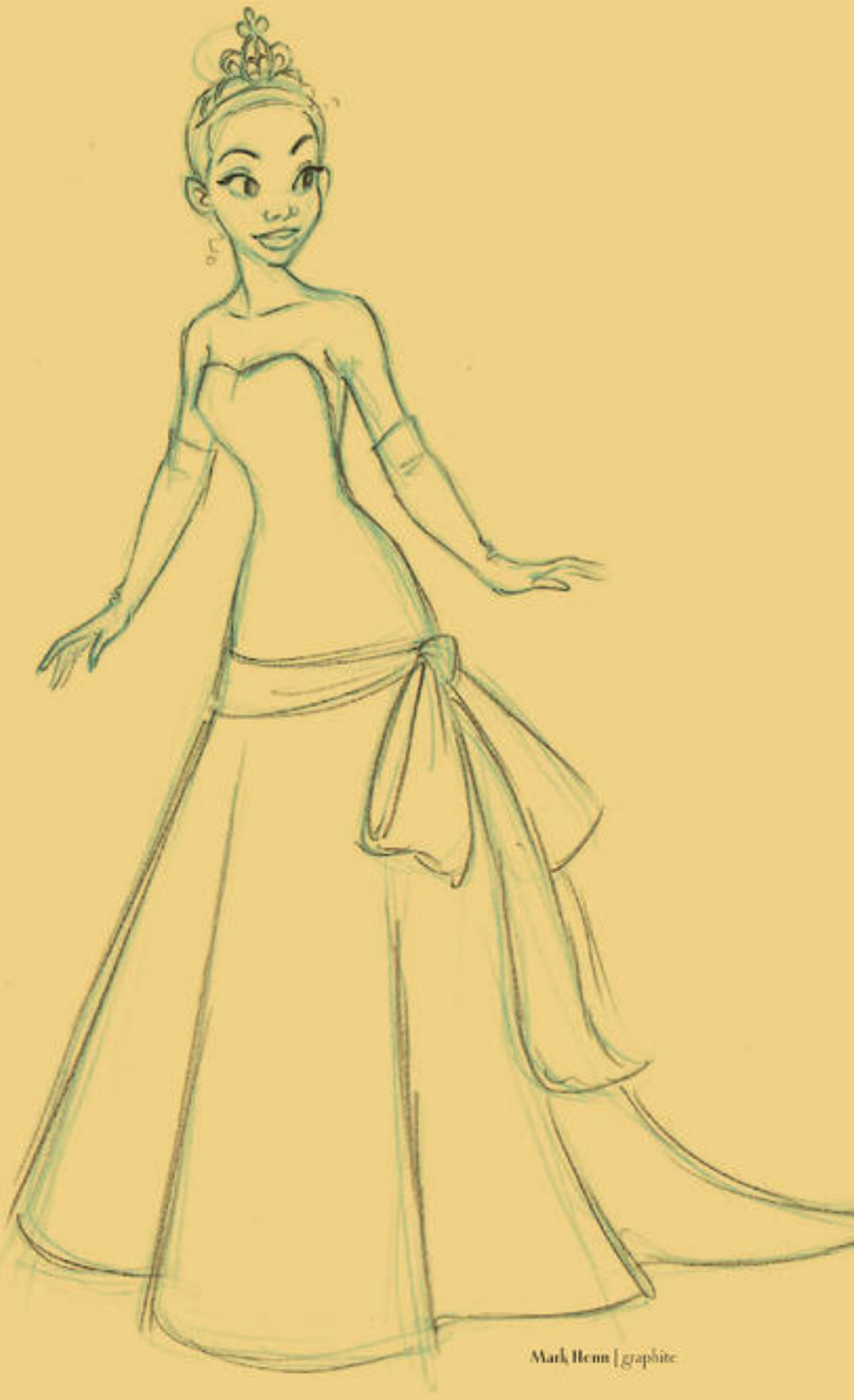
TIANA

Although Tiana is certainly the heroine of the story, and is ultimately revealed to be a princess, she is miles away from any other royal maiden in the Disney canon.

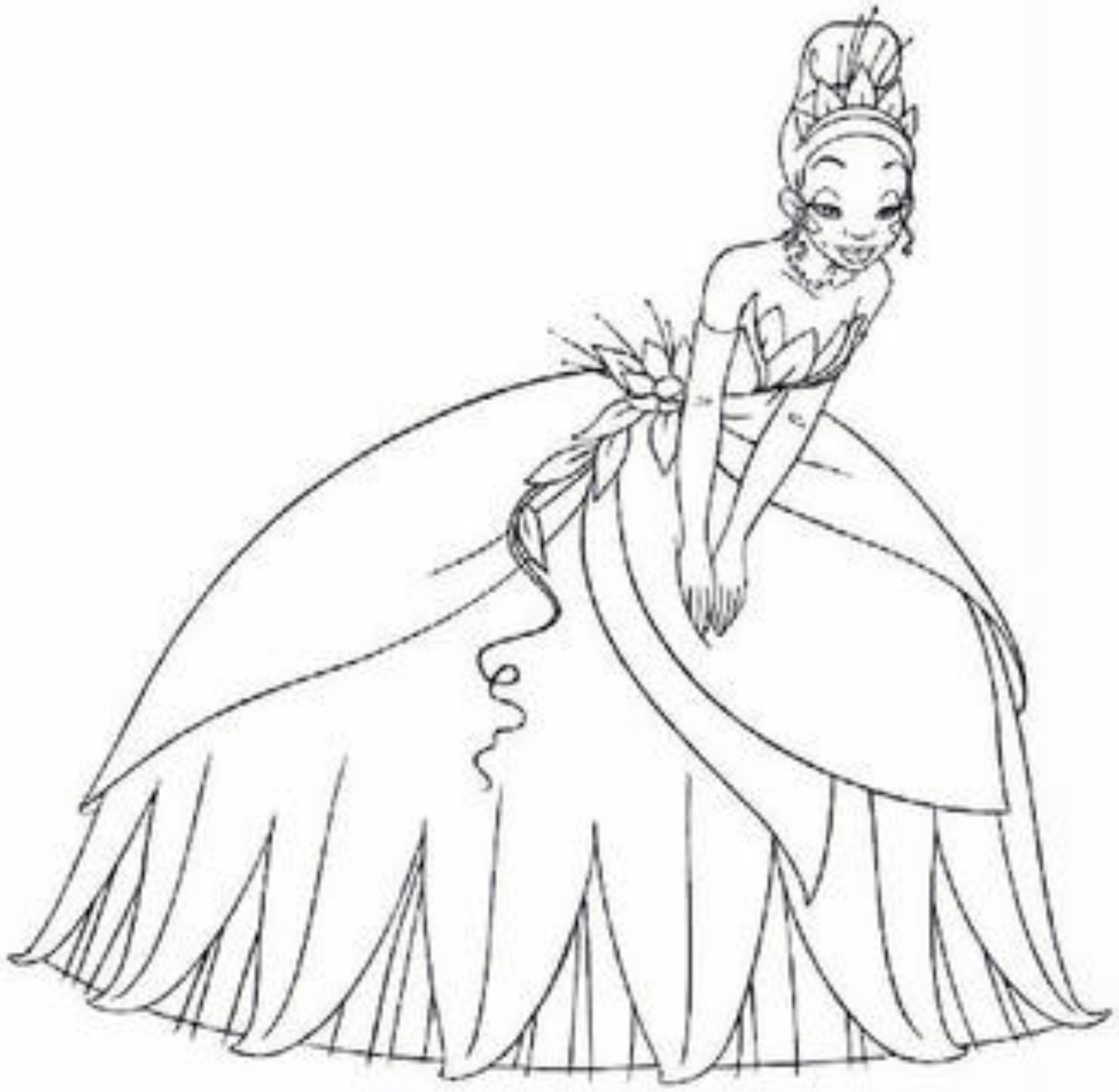
Supervising animator Mark Henn explains, "She's a little more vulnerable right off the bat, so I think you can more easily identify with her, or want to cheer her on. Our animated leading ladies have evolved over the decades, starting with 'princesses in peril' like Snow White—characters to whom events happen, rather than figures of action motivating their own story. And then Belle and Ariel were real departures, where if you take them out of the picture, there is no picture. Princess Jasmine was less prominent as a heroine, but still, she made decisions and was a little more strong-willed—much less passive, or just a contrivance.

"Mulan was another champion of that. That whole story is based on the fact that she makes a decision to protect her family's honor, and to save her father's life. That's very appealing to me as an animator. It was an easy character to fall in love with, and get in her corner. Tiana is a similar character, and has her own motivating desire and decisions that drive her and make her interesting and sympathetic."

Henn taps into his understanding of his character's motivation when drawing her movement—to Henn it is all part of an animator's performance. His opinions and ideas about Disney princesses are not just academic, they are personally informed. He is kiddingly referred to as "The Actor's Studio Animator," and Disney's greatest leading lady—having animated (among other characters) Ariel, Belle, Jasmine, Pocahontas, and Mulan.



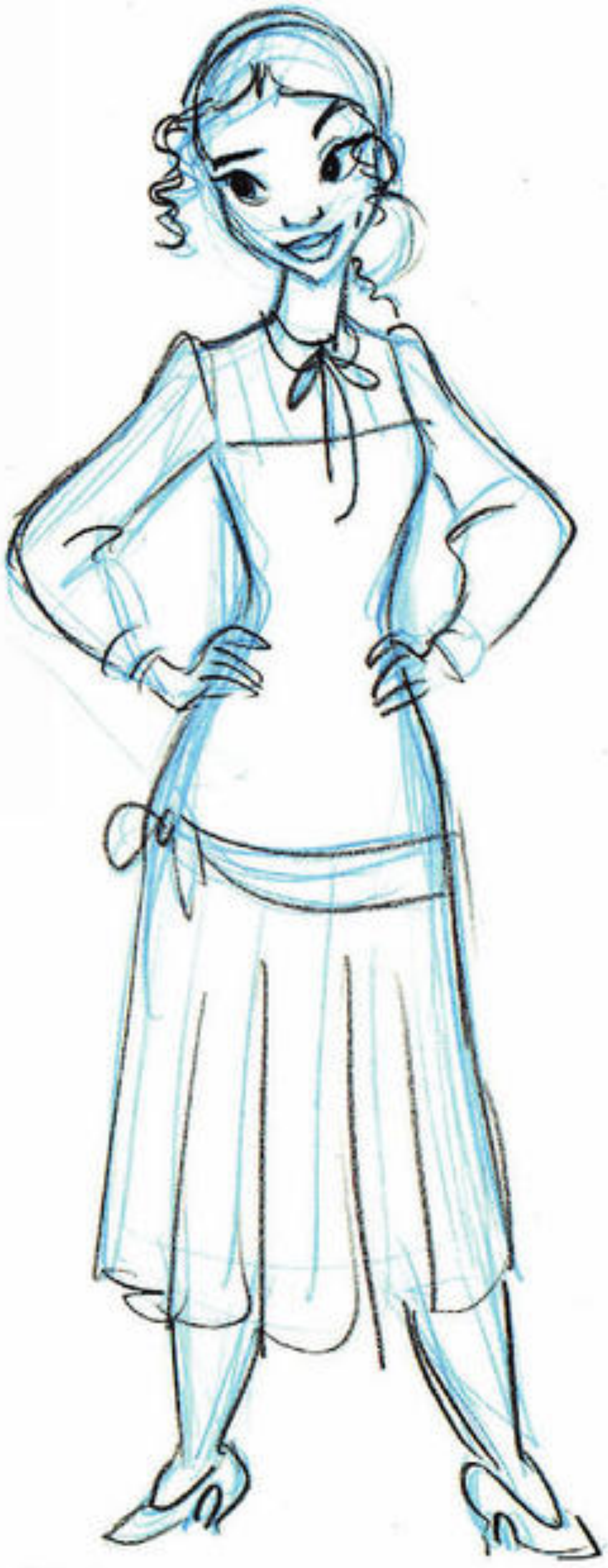
Mark Henn | graphite



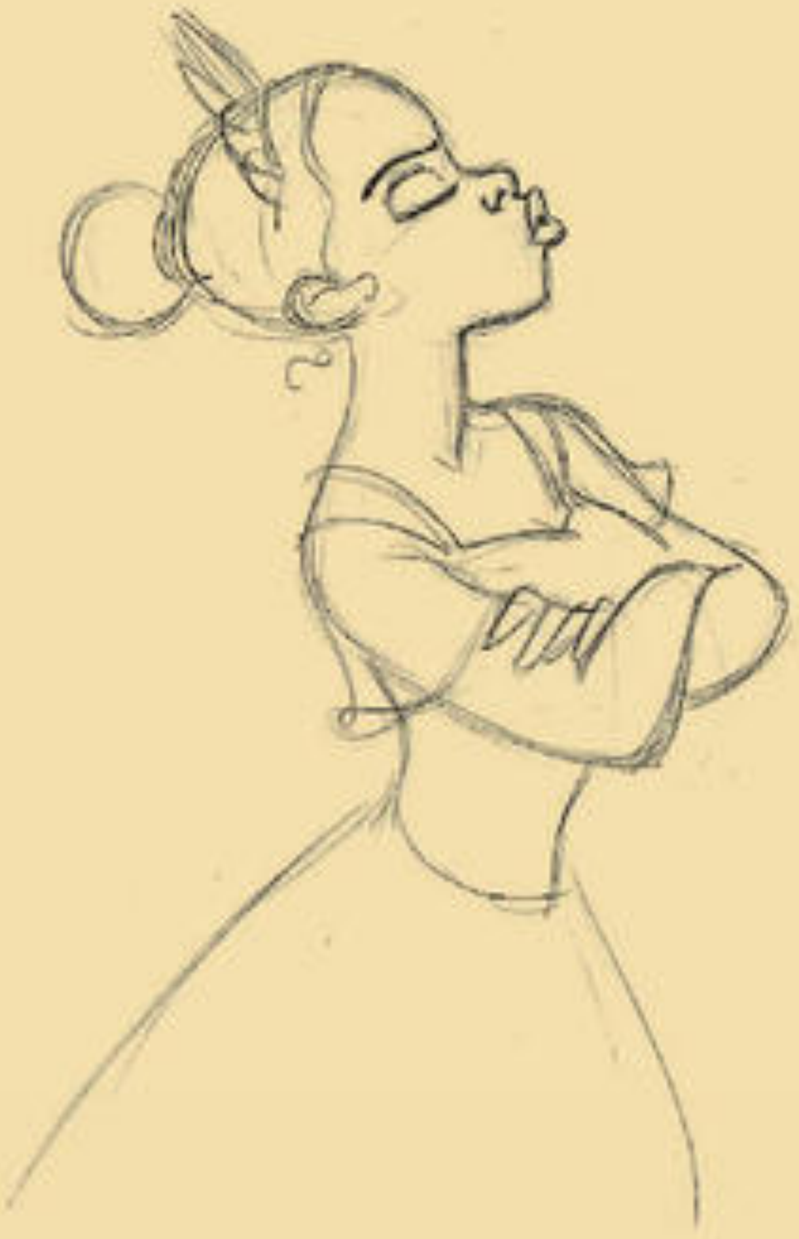
Rachel Bibb | graphite

"I had a moment of realization a little while ago when walking down the hallway. There was a Disney Princess lineup on display. On it, images of all of the iconic princesses of the past, from Snow White and Cinderella to Ariel and Belle. And right there at the end was Tiana. After drawing thousands of Tiana's in the last year, it struck me all of a sudden, that soon she's going to be out there. And she will exist as an iconic Disney princess far beyond my career as an artist. That's an awesome thought."

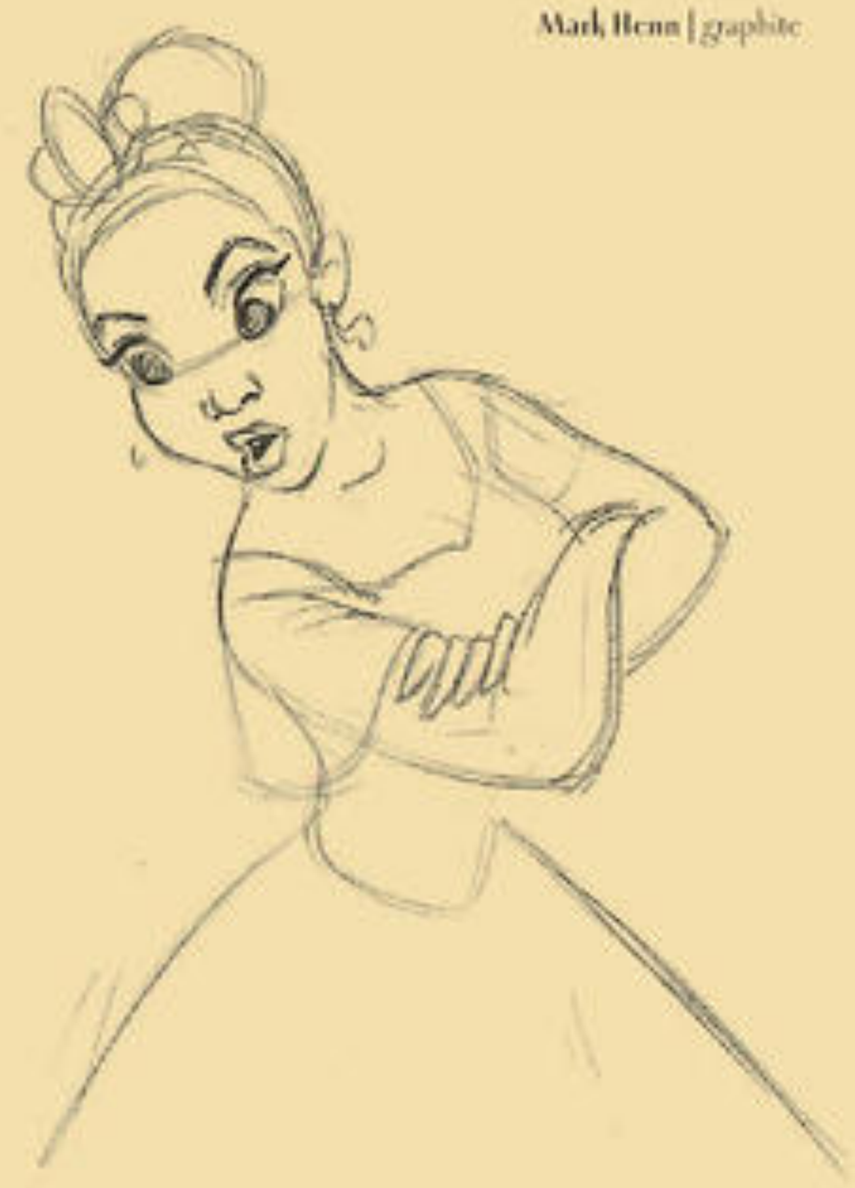
—Rachel Bibb, lead key



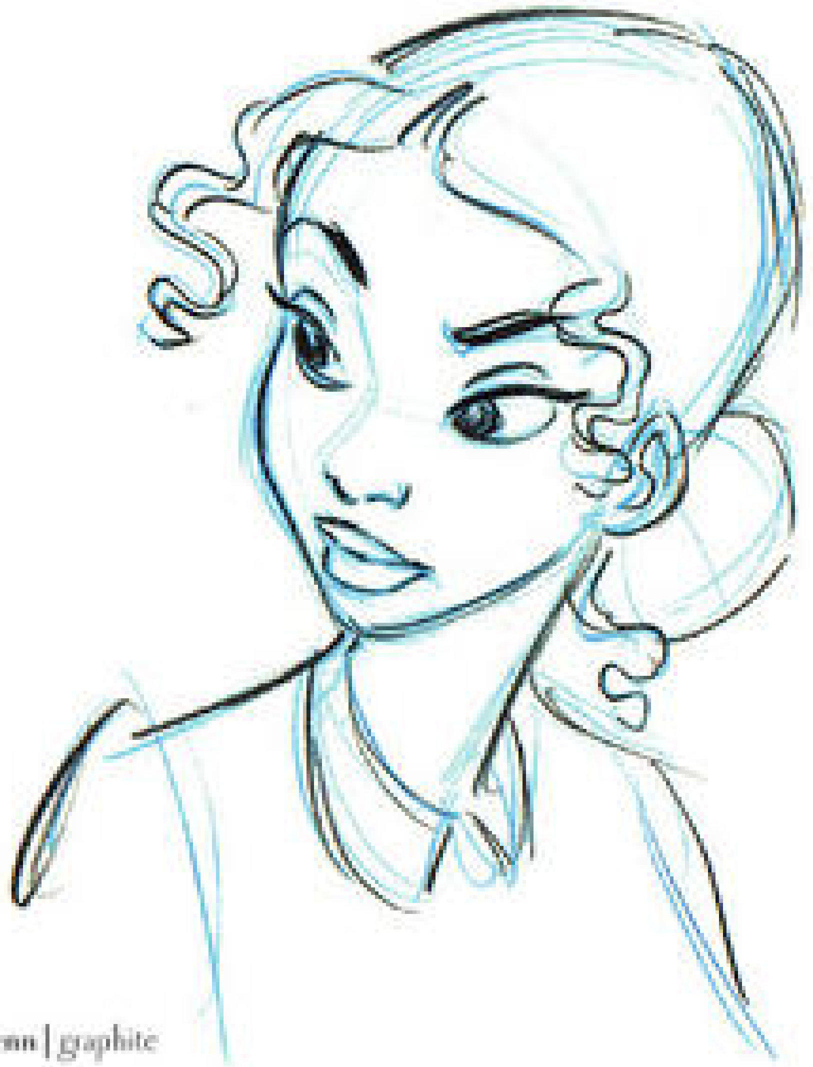
Mark Henn | graphite



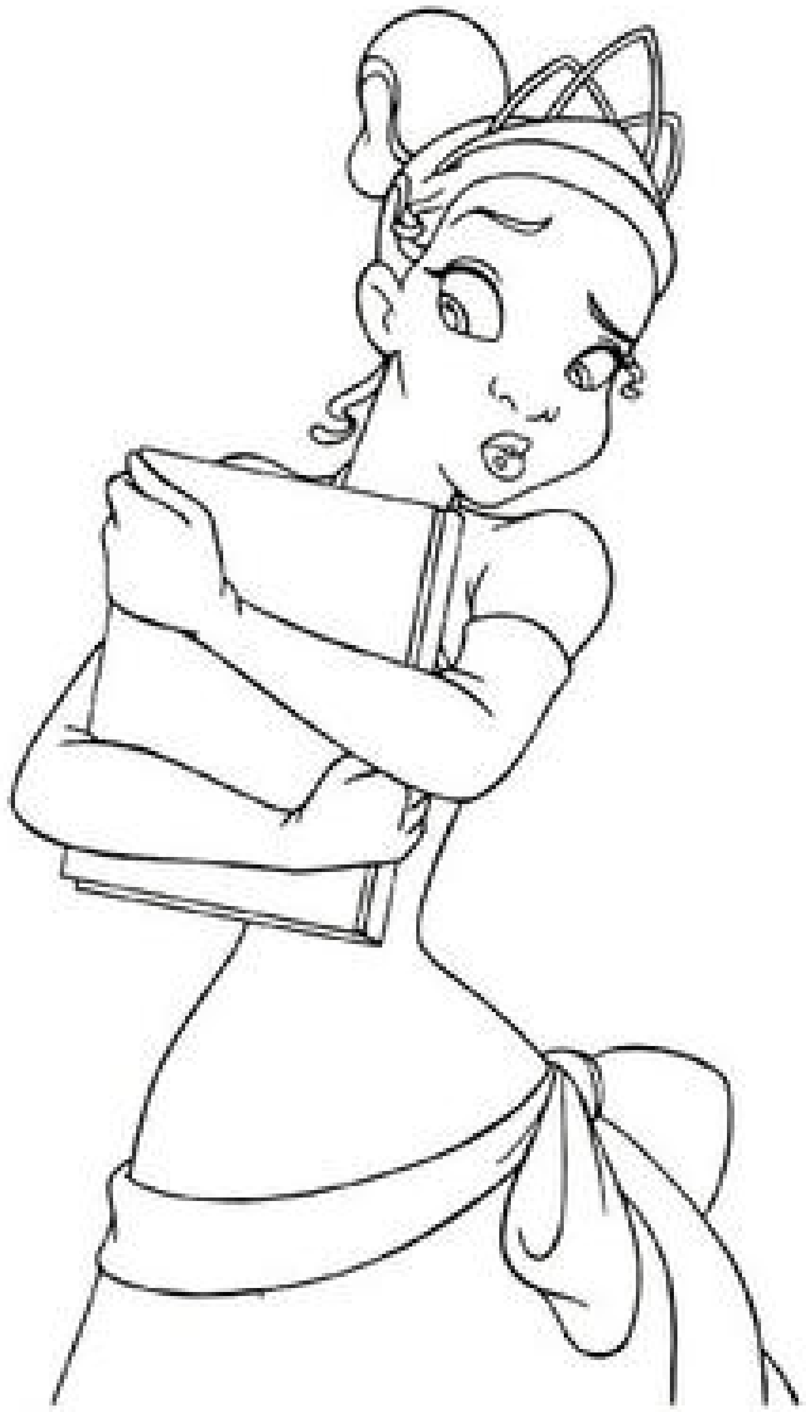
Mark Henn | graphite



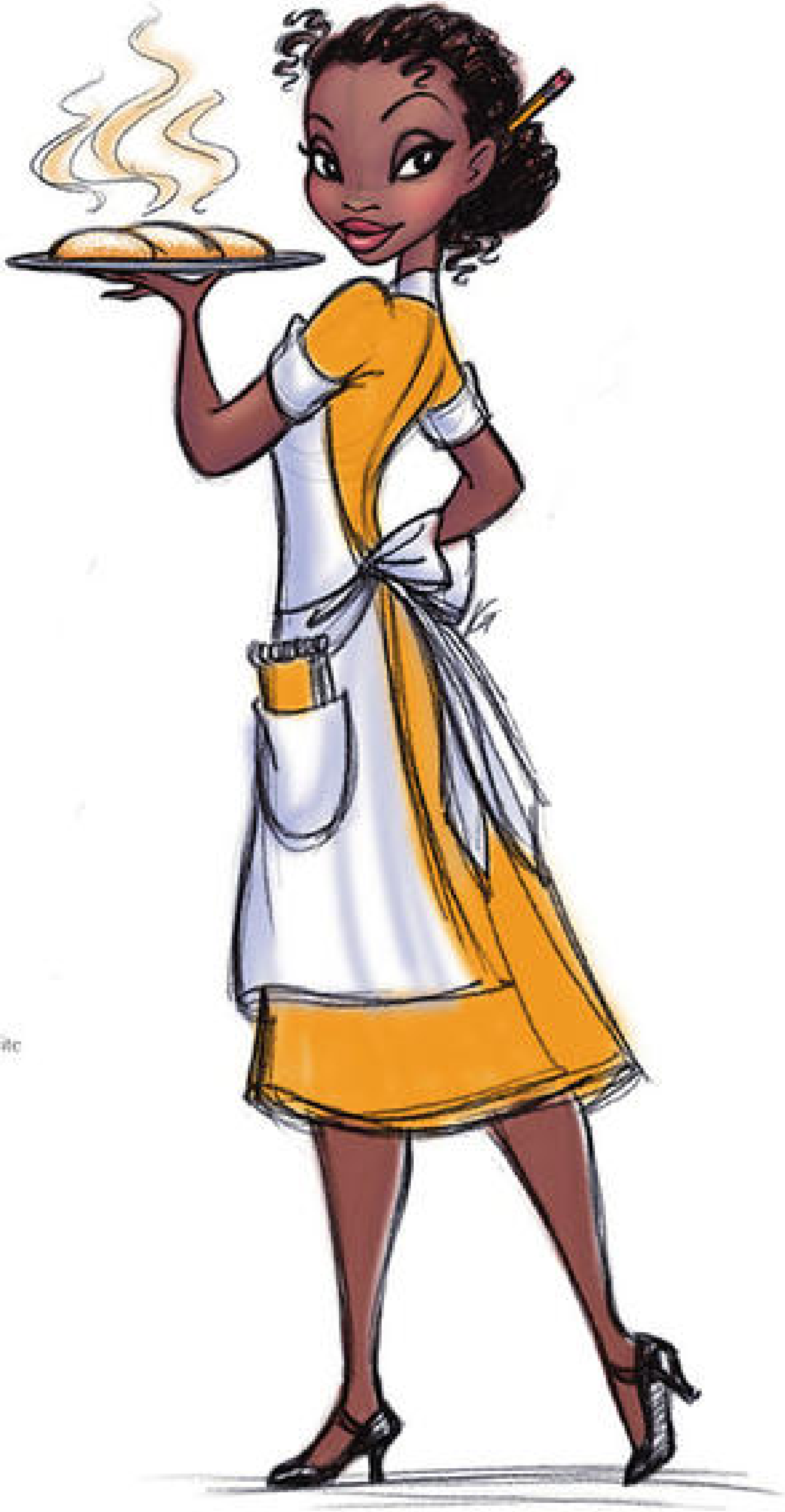
Mark Henn | graphite



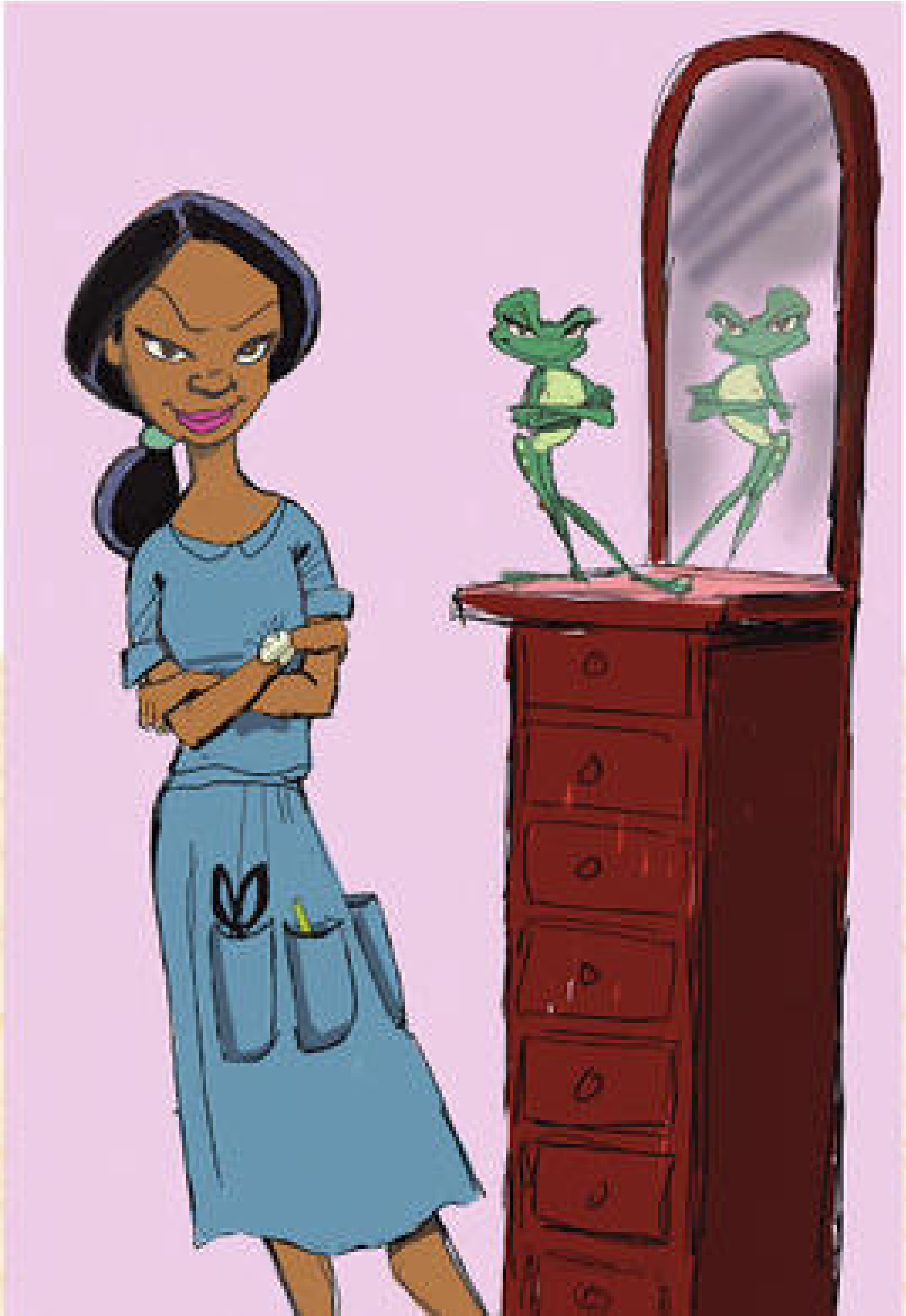
Mark Henn | graphite



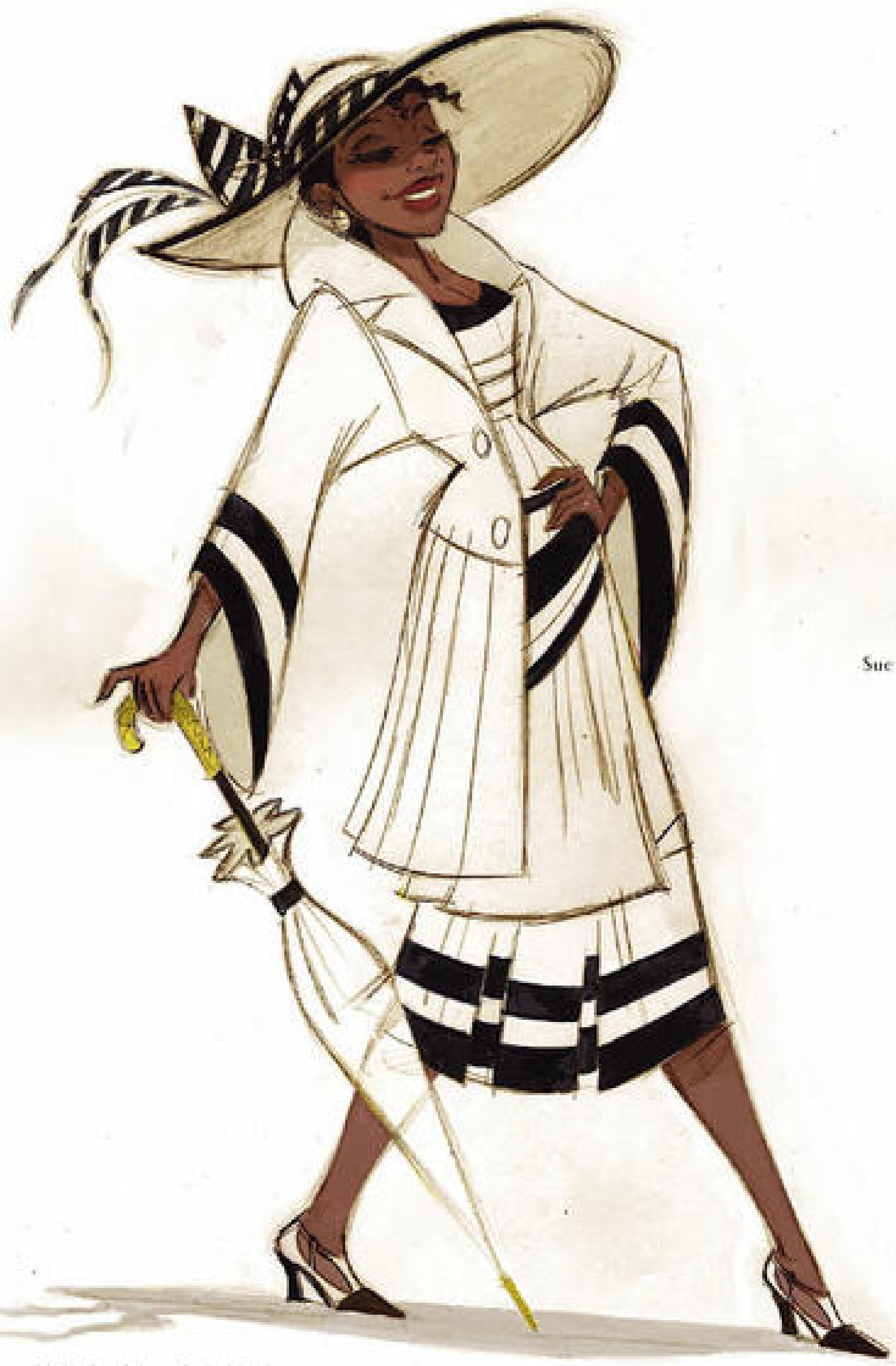
Rachel Bibb | graphite



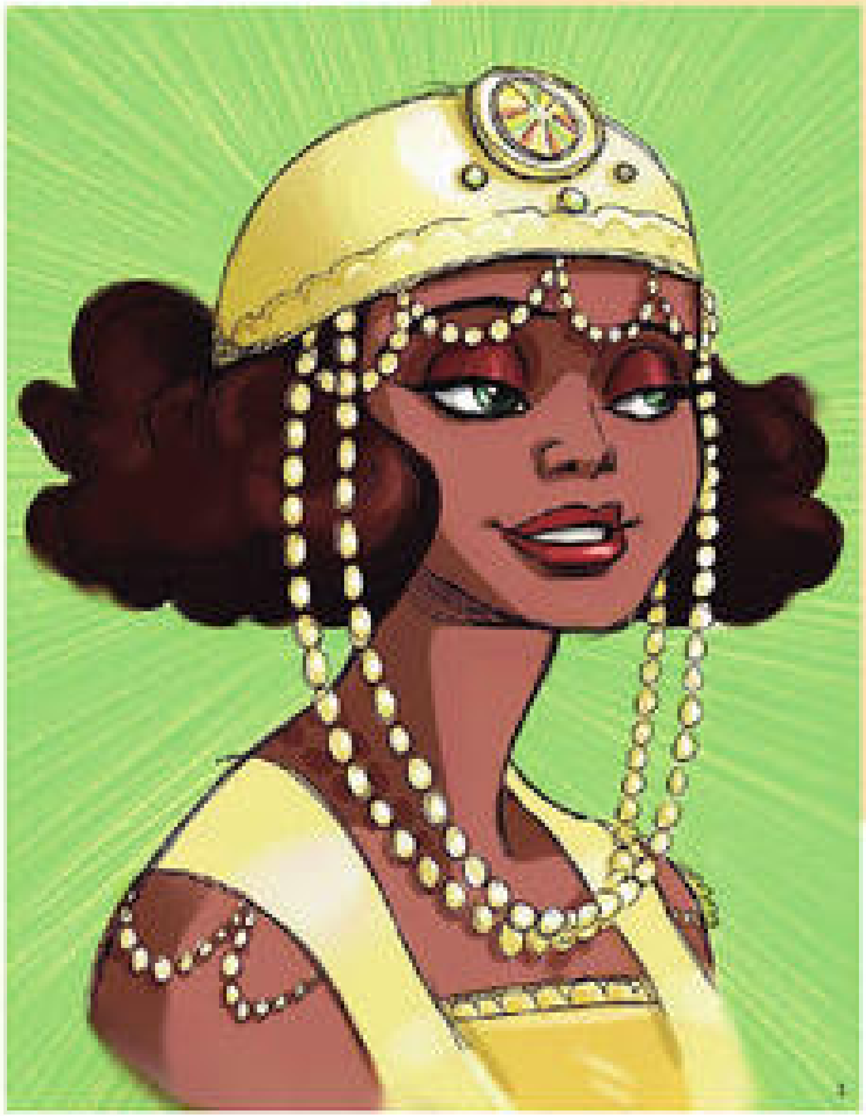
Kevin Gellaher | digital



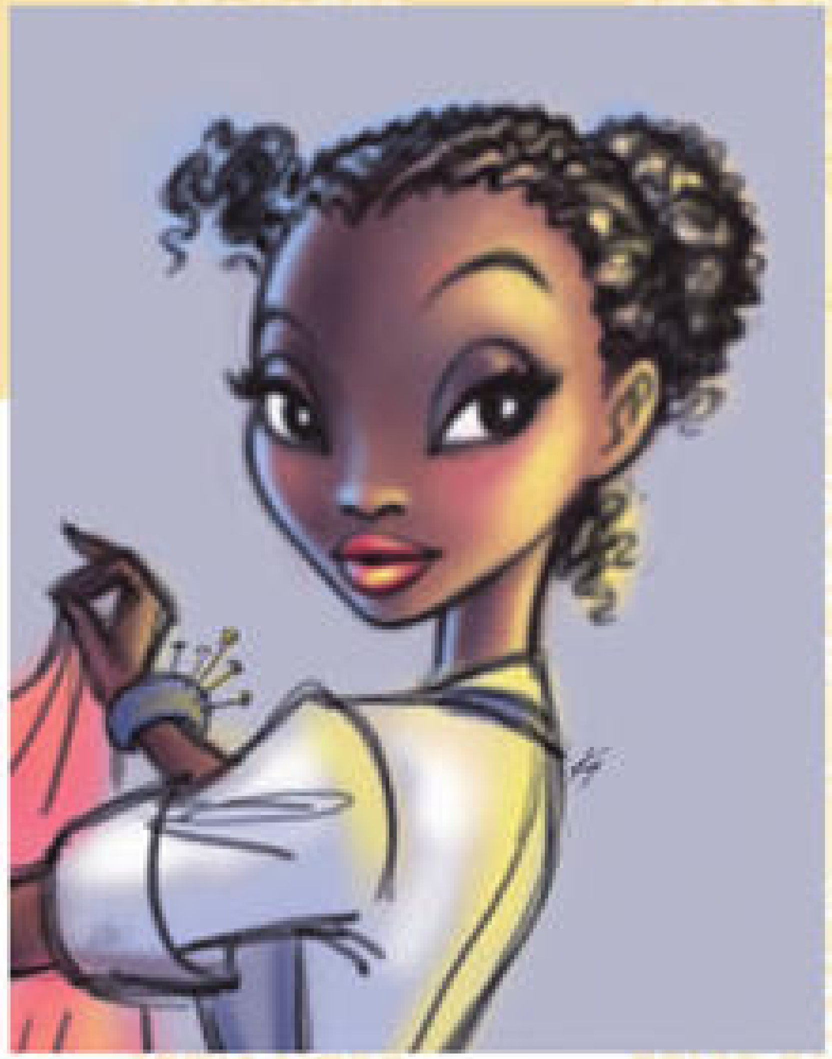
John Musker | digital



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



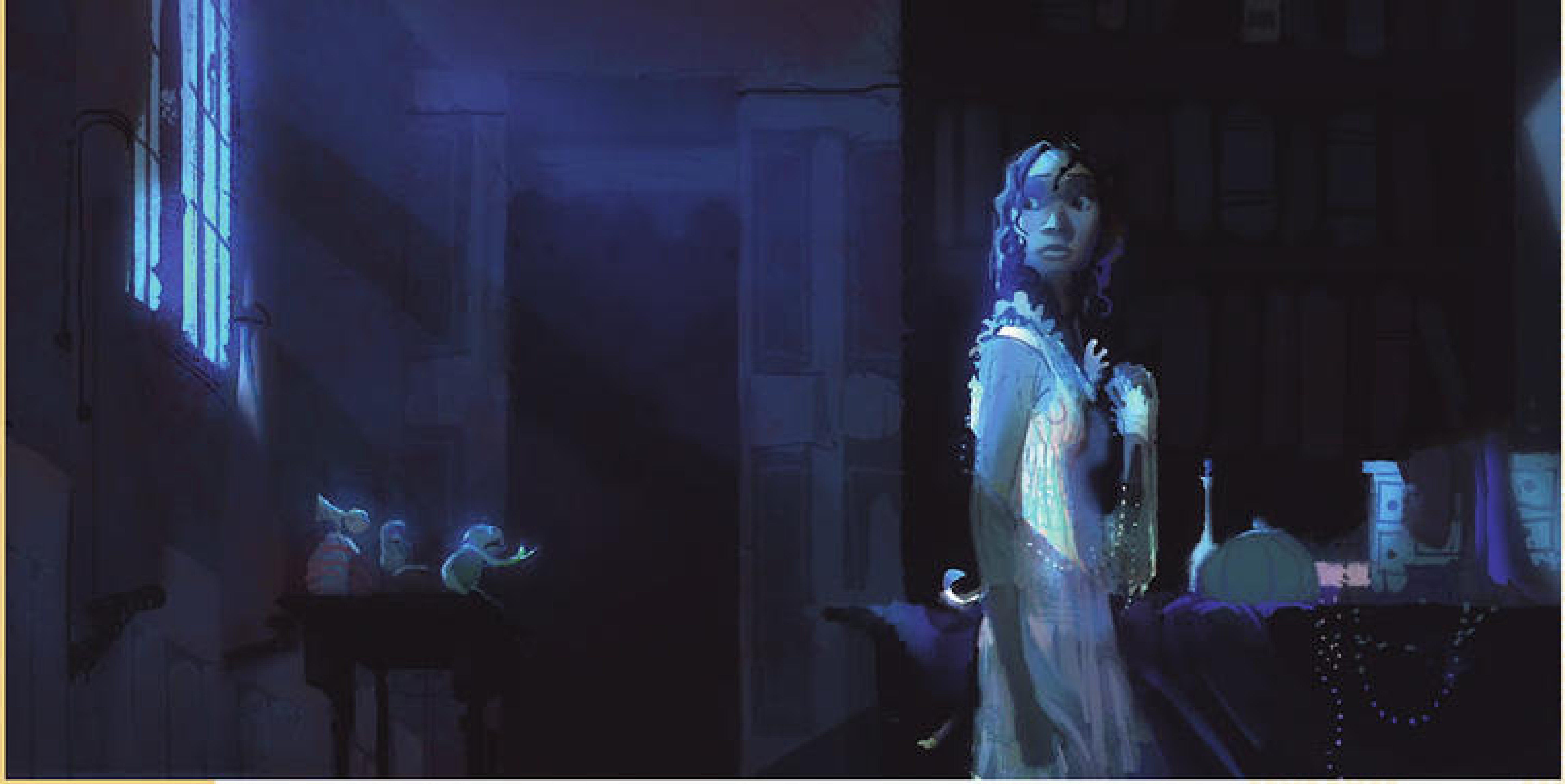
Sue Nichols | digital



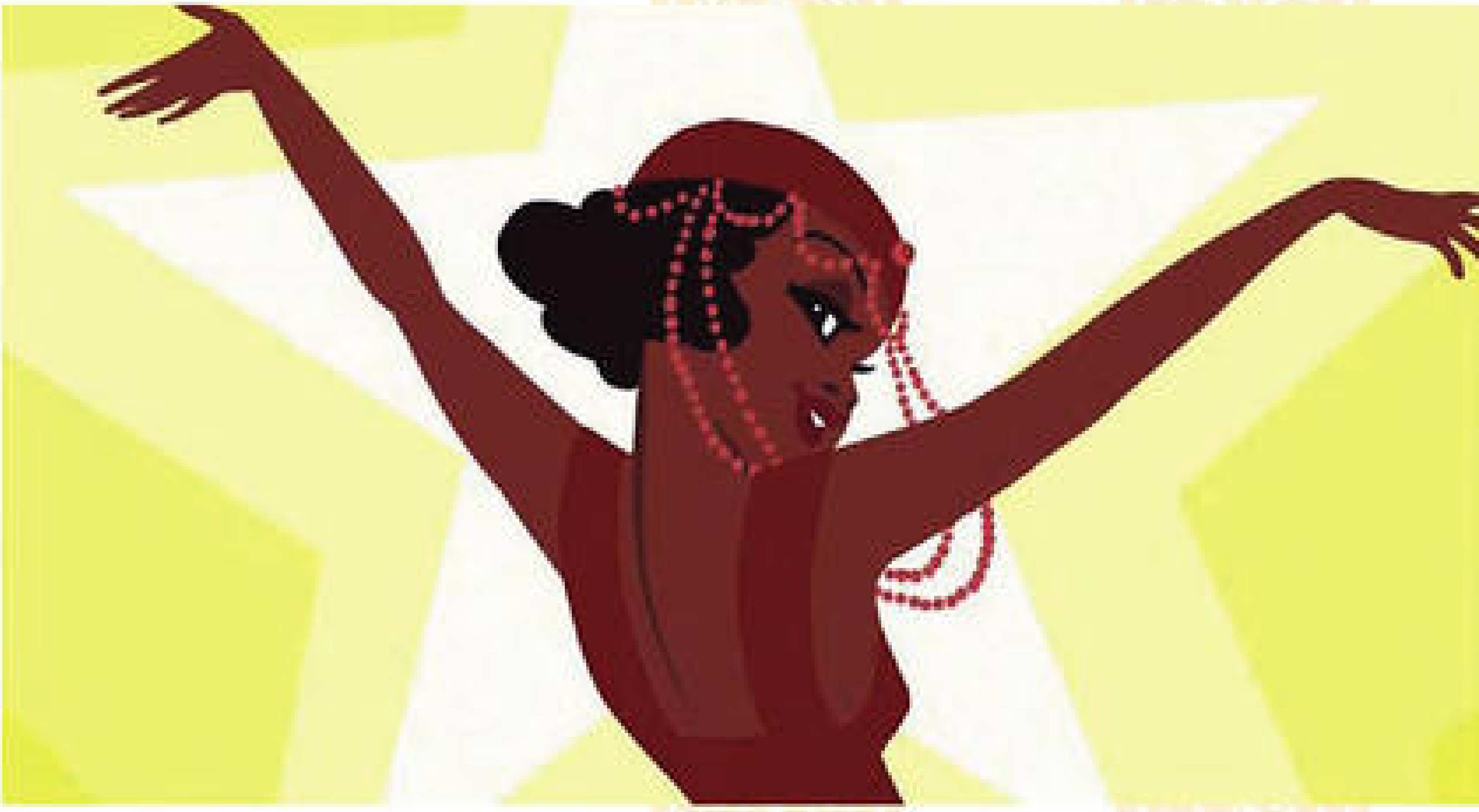
Kevin Gollaher | digital

"I find myself as an actor trying to put myself in all of my characters' shoes, whether it's a woman, or a lion cub, or a mouse, or whatever. There's a level of the integrity of how the characters move and are genuine that's believable. I think particularly with the leading ladies it's important. You can't be wild and crazy. There's a level of exaggeration that you can put in there, but it's got to be within that sphere of that character's makeup."

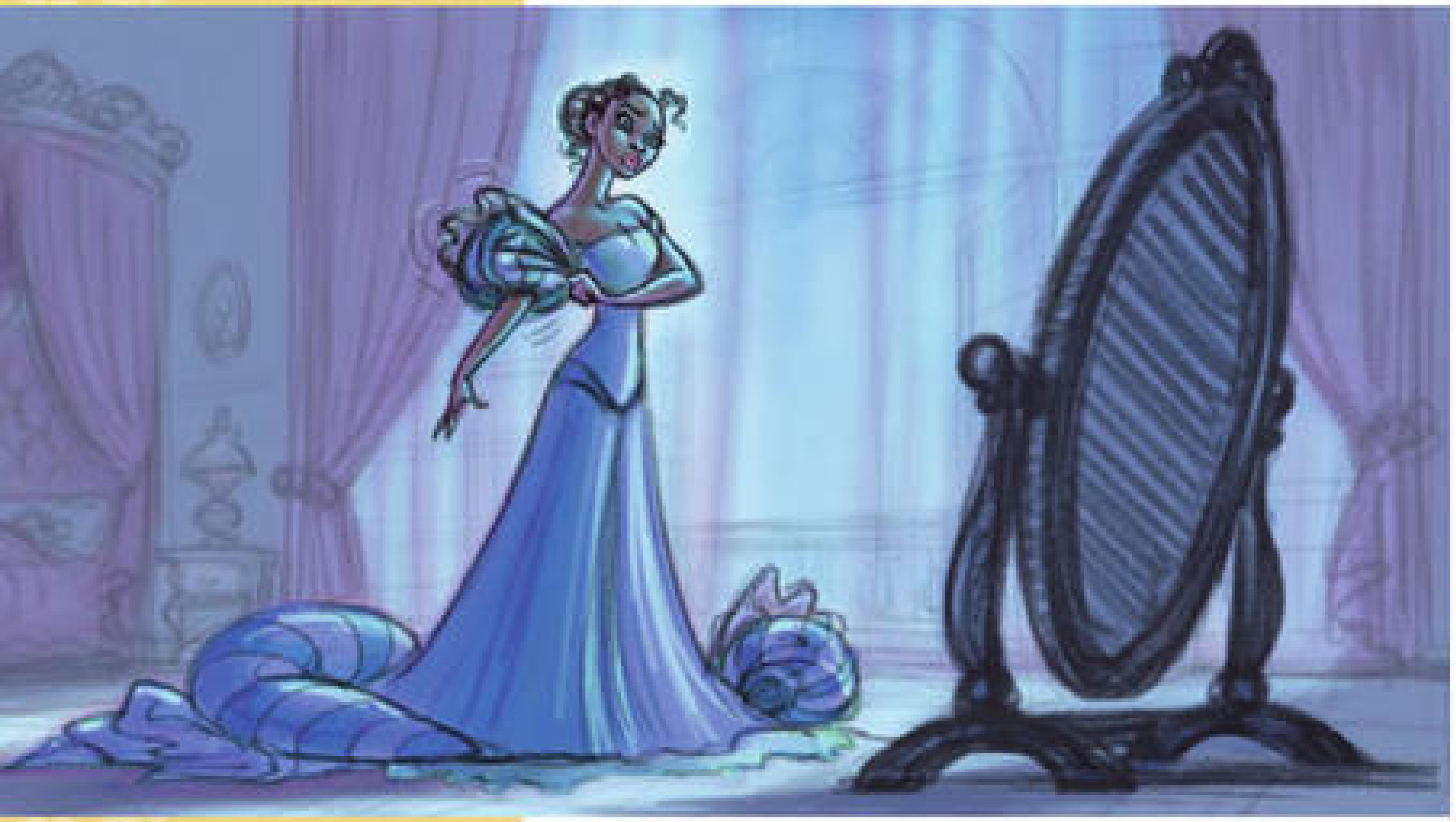
—MARK HENN, supervising animator



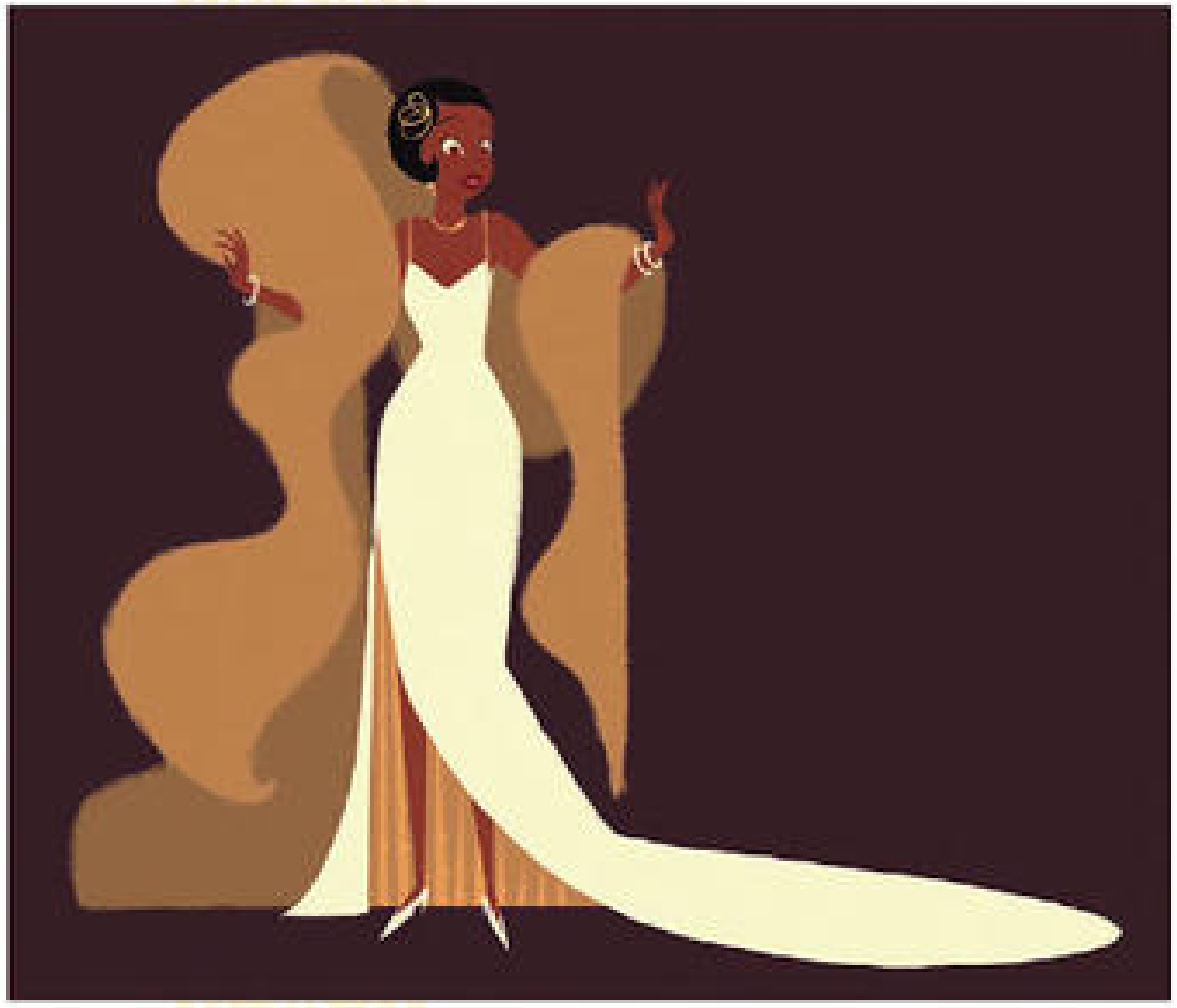
Chris Appelhans | digital



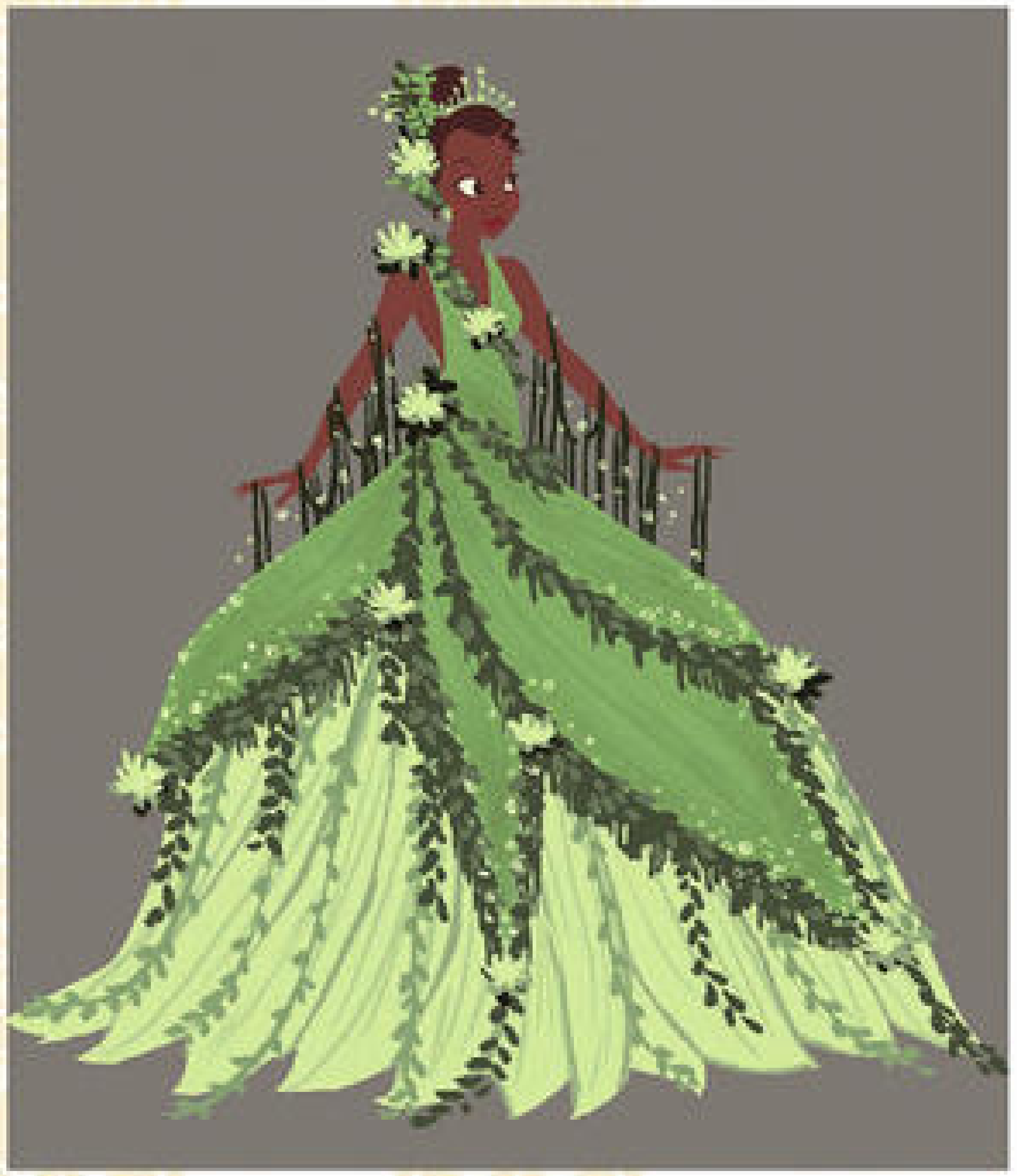
Sue Nichols | digital



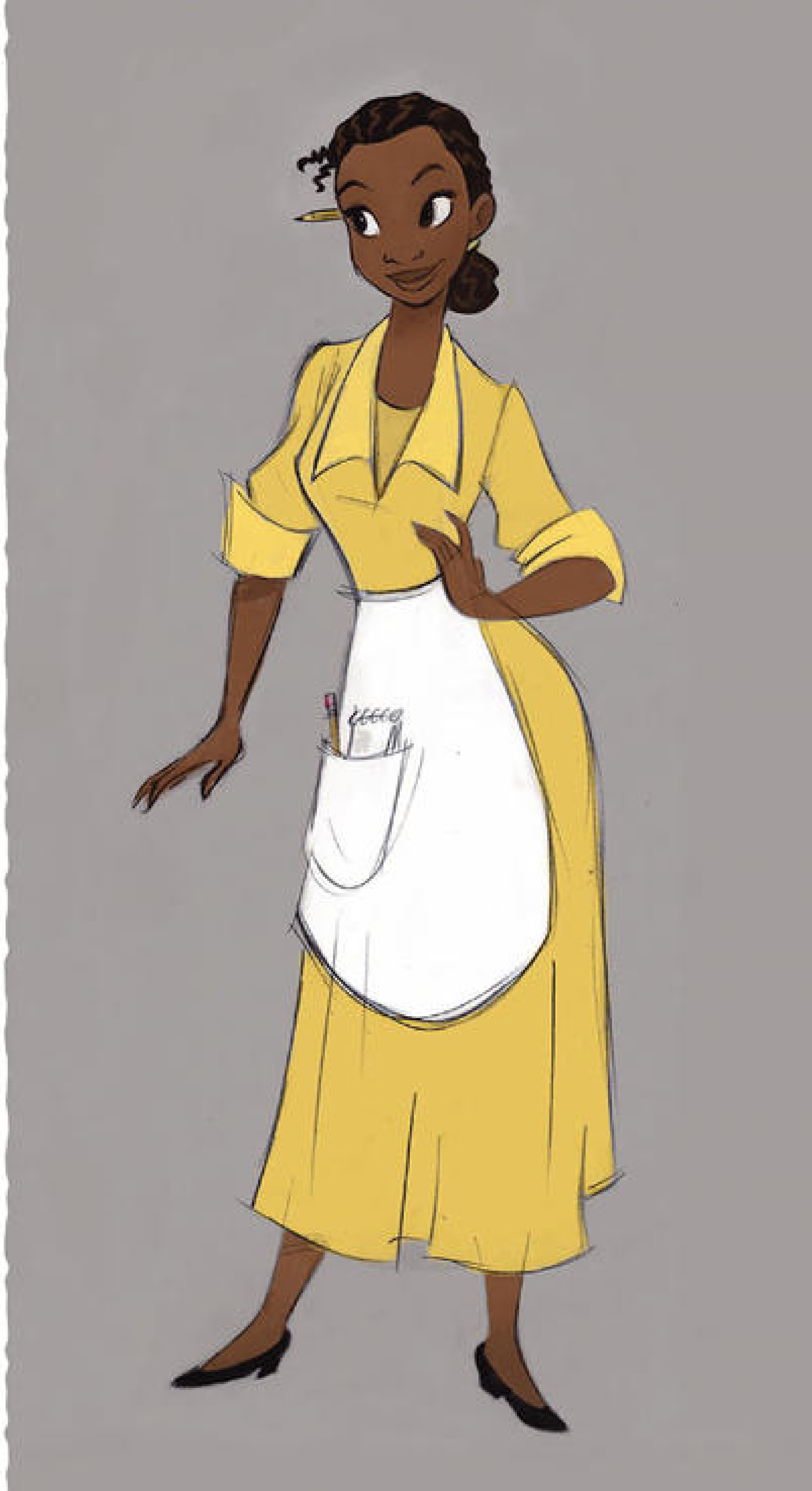
Kevin Gollaher | digital



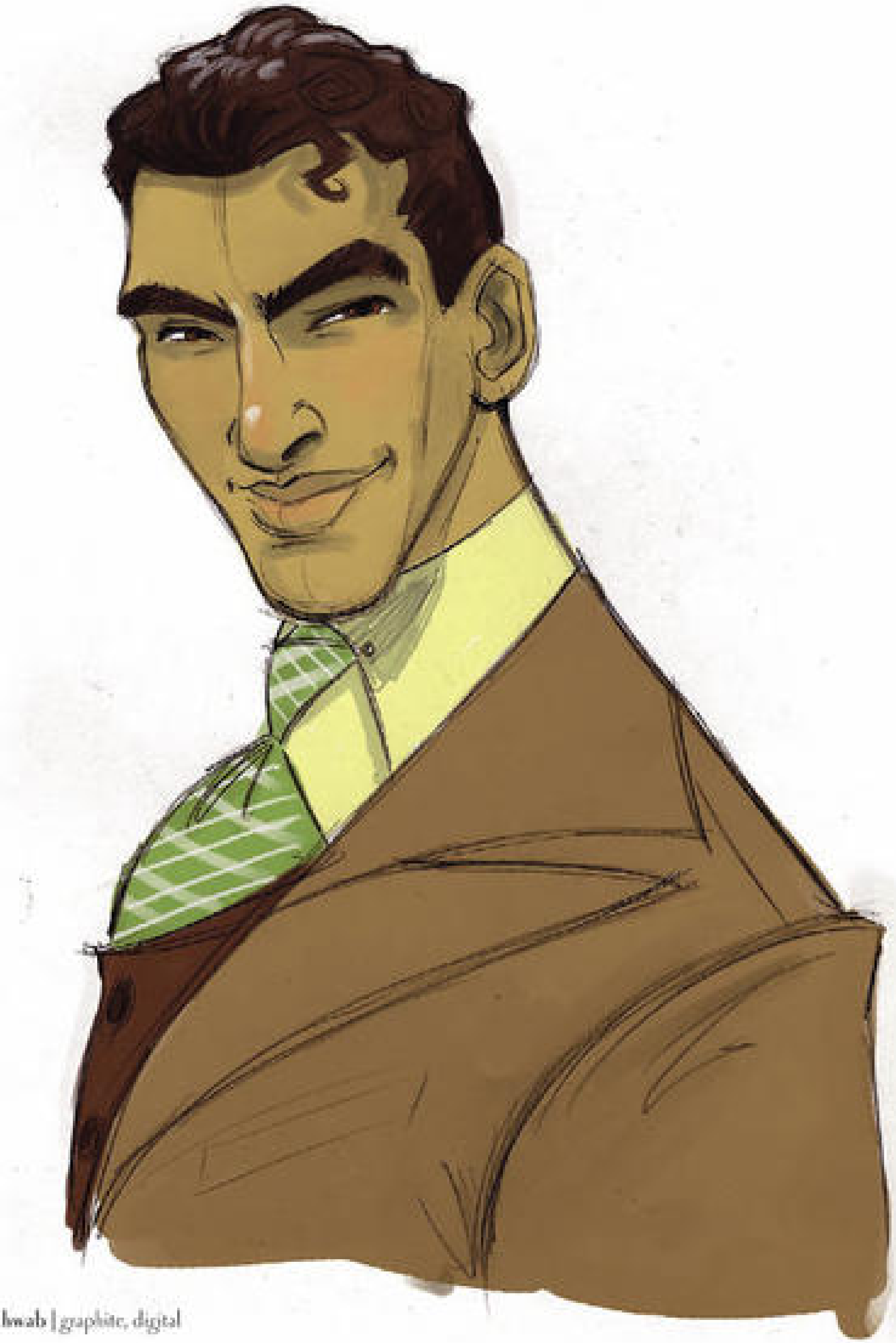
Lorelay Bove | digital



Lorelay Bove | digital



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

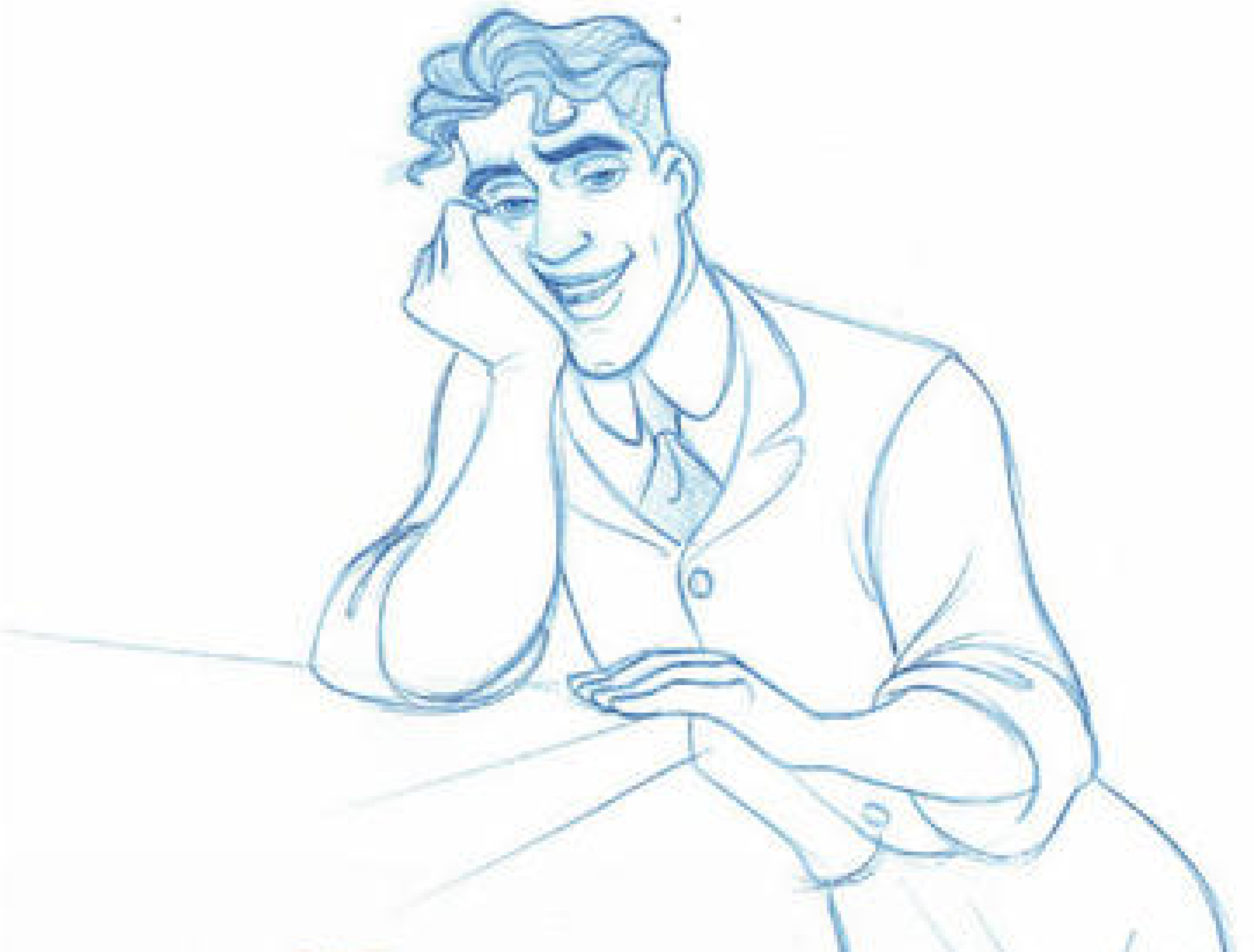
PRINCE NAVEEN

Prince Naveen was drawn to New Orleans from his far-off kingdom of Maldonia by the city's romantic and mysterious qualities. Although spoiled and irresponsible, Naveen has an irresistible charm and *joie de vivre* that captivate those around him, and a passion for the Dixieland jazz that was popularized by Paul Whiteman, Jimmie Noone, Earl Hines, King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton, and Louis Armstrong.

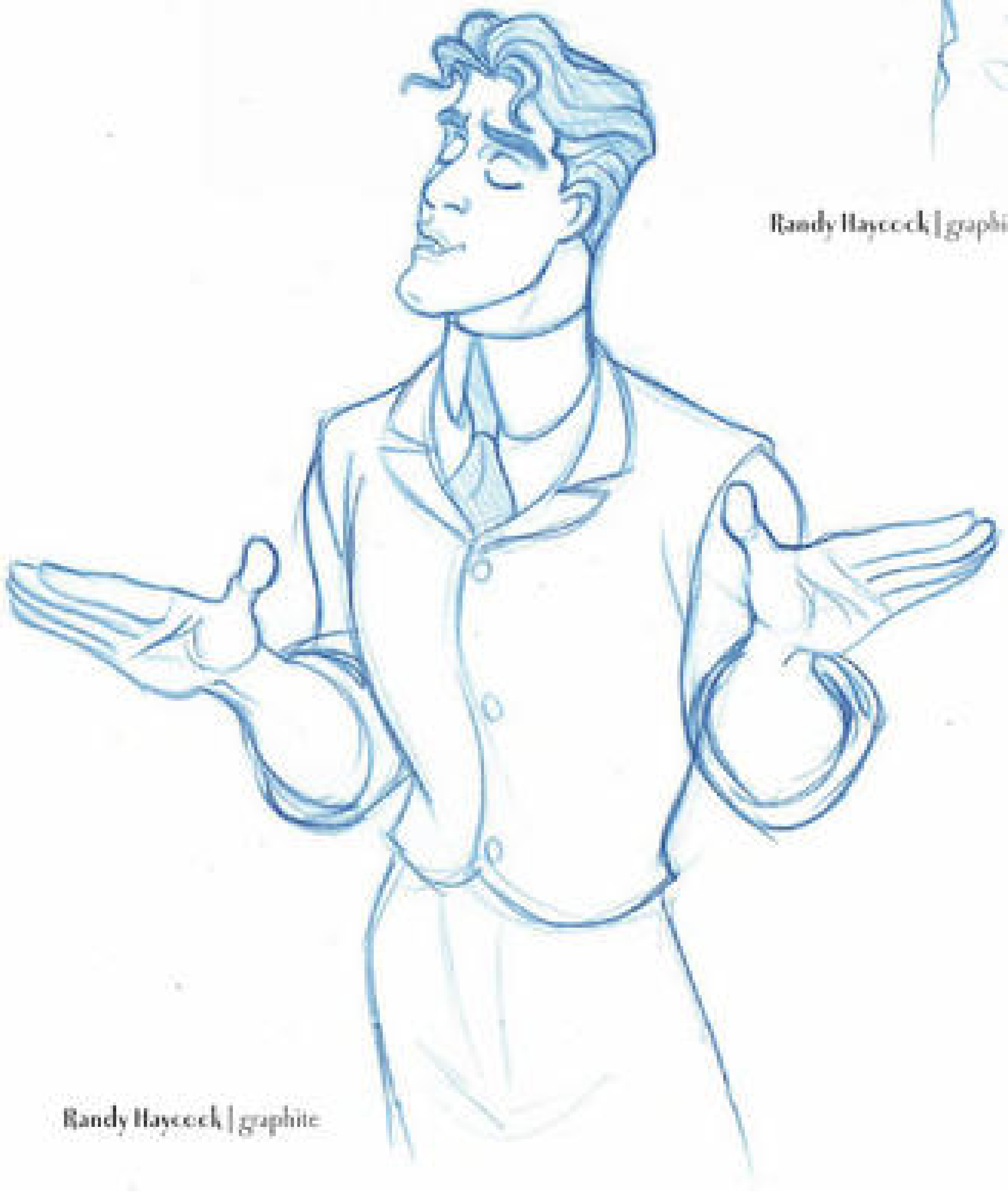
"Disney has a long tradition of princes, but they all fall short of being characters in and of themselves," says Randy Haycock, supervising animator of Naveen. "They're functional. They give the princesses somebody to fall in love with. But in terms of having a real personality, or a real attitude—or any kind of flaw, in fact? Never. Prince Eric probably came the closest to having actual personality. But he was still flawless. The compelling thing to me about Naveen is that he is a flawed guy. He's very self-centered, and he's not really paying attention to how anything he does affects anybody but himself.

"We've never had a prince that really influenced a heroine," Haycock continues. "It was always love at first sight. For once we have a girl that meets a guy and it follows a romantic-comedy idea where the couple meets and they really don't like each other. And it takes them a while to warm up to each other because they are such opposites.

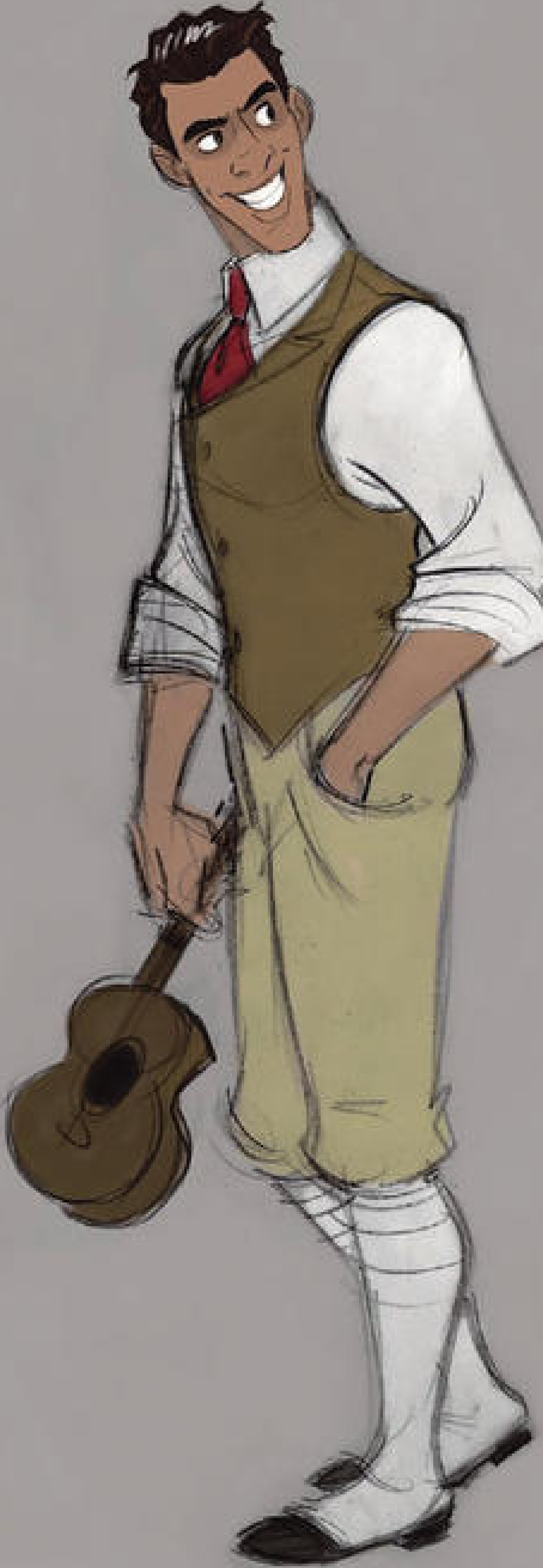
"Like anyone, Naveen's flaws are actually part of his virtues. The heroine has a flaw, too—she doesn't know how to appreciate life. She doesn't know how to enjoy herself. And that's what Naveen teaches her. He teaches her to settle down once in a while and simply appreciate what's going on. Have some fun, enjoy, be happy with what you have around you."



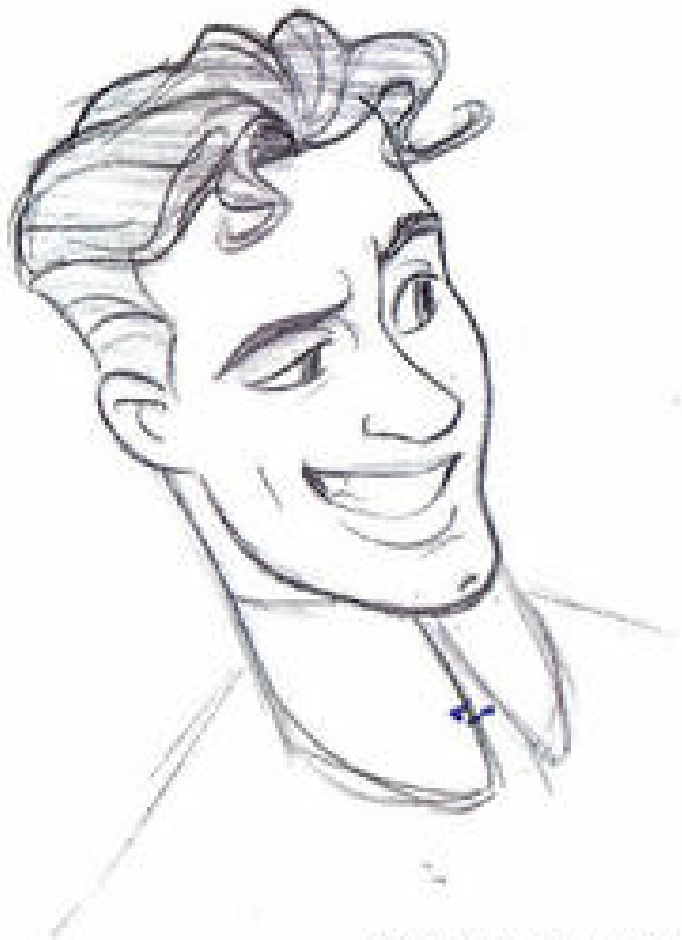
Randy Haycock | graphite



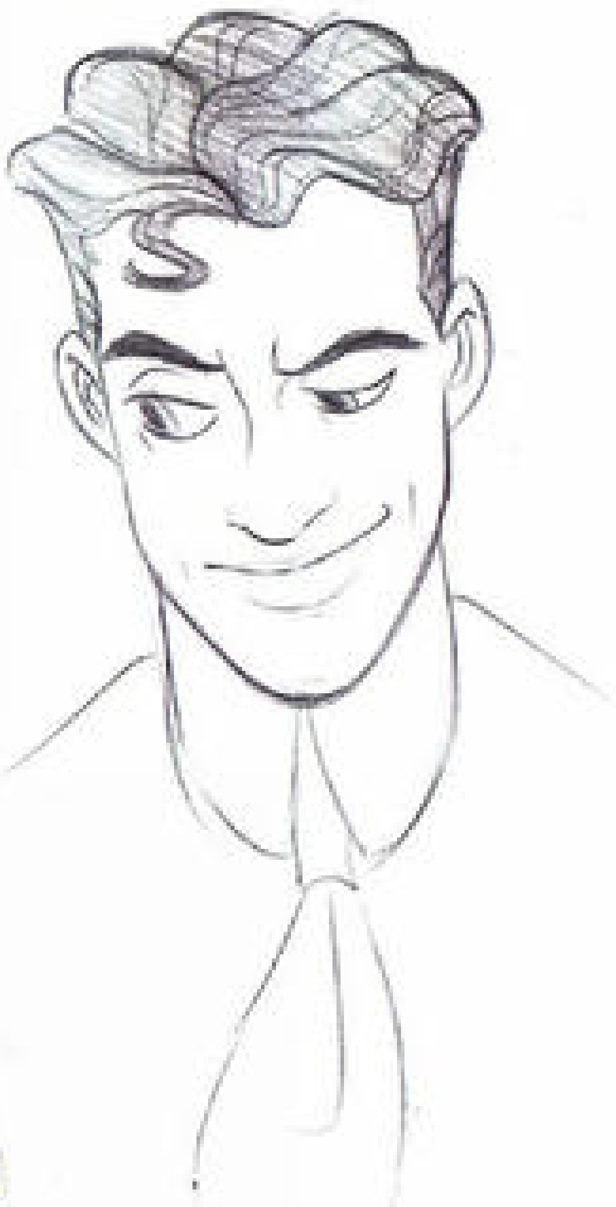
Randy Haycock | graphite

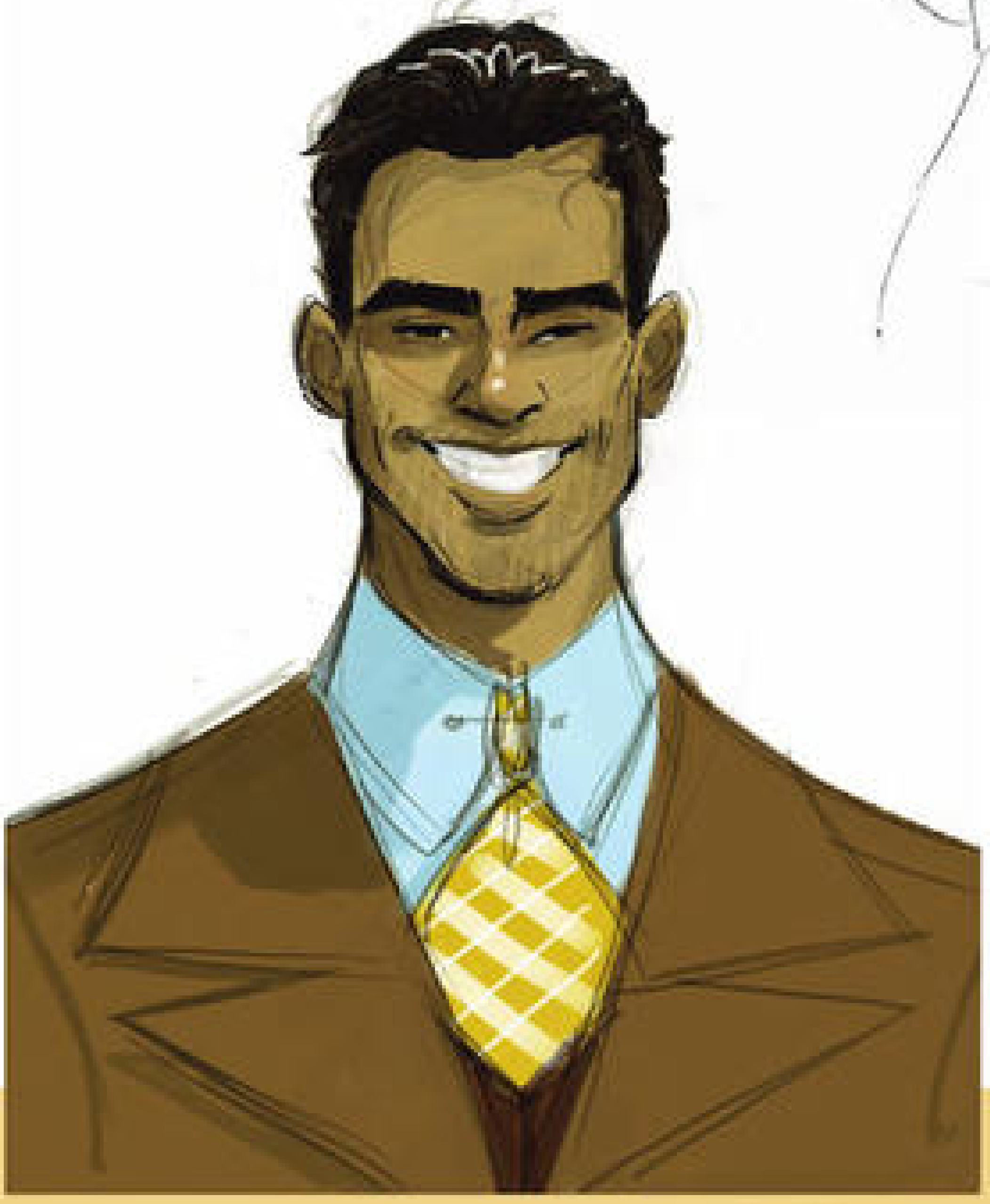


Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

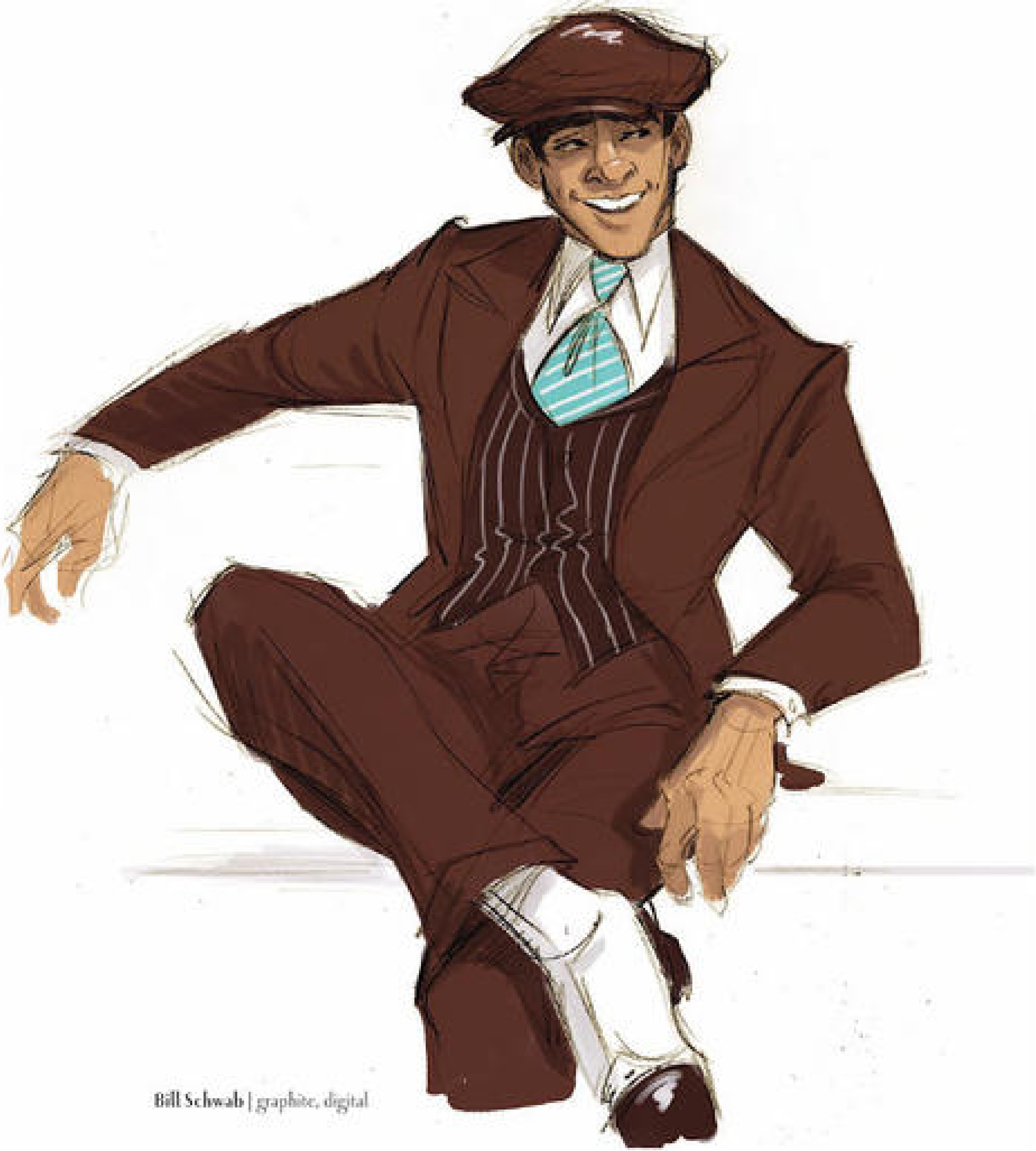


Randy Haycock | graphite

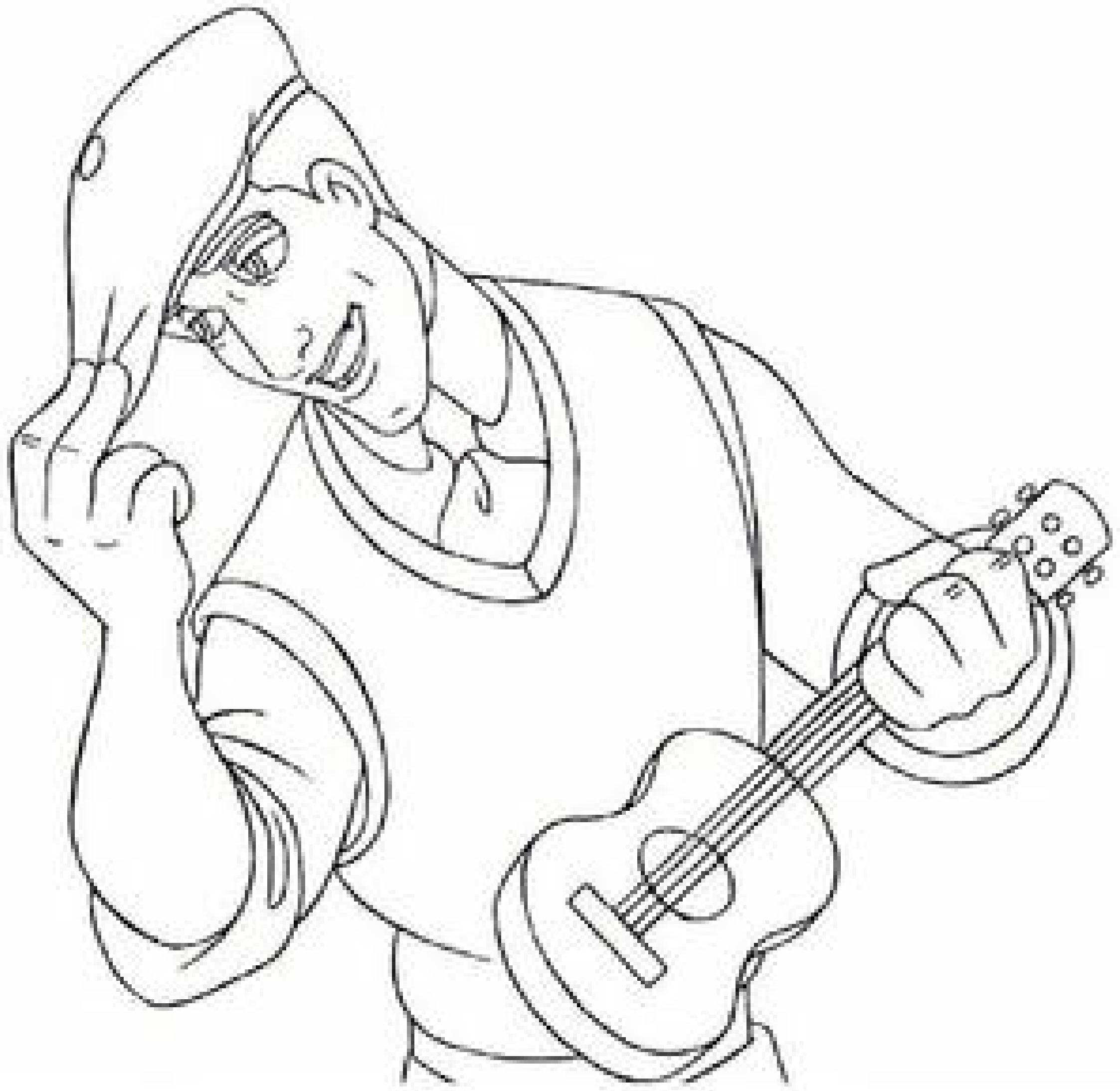




Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

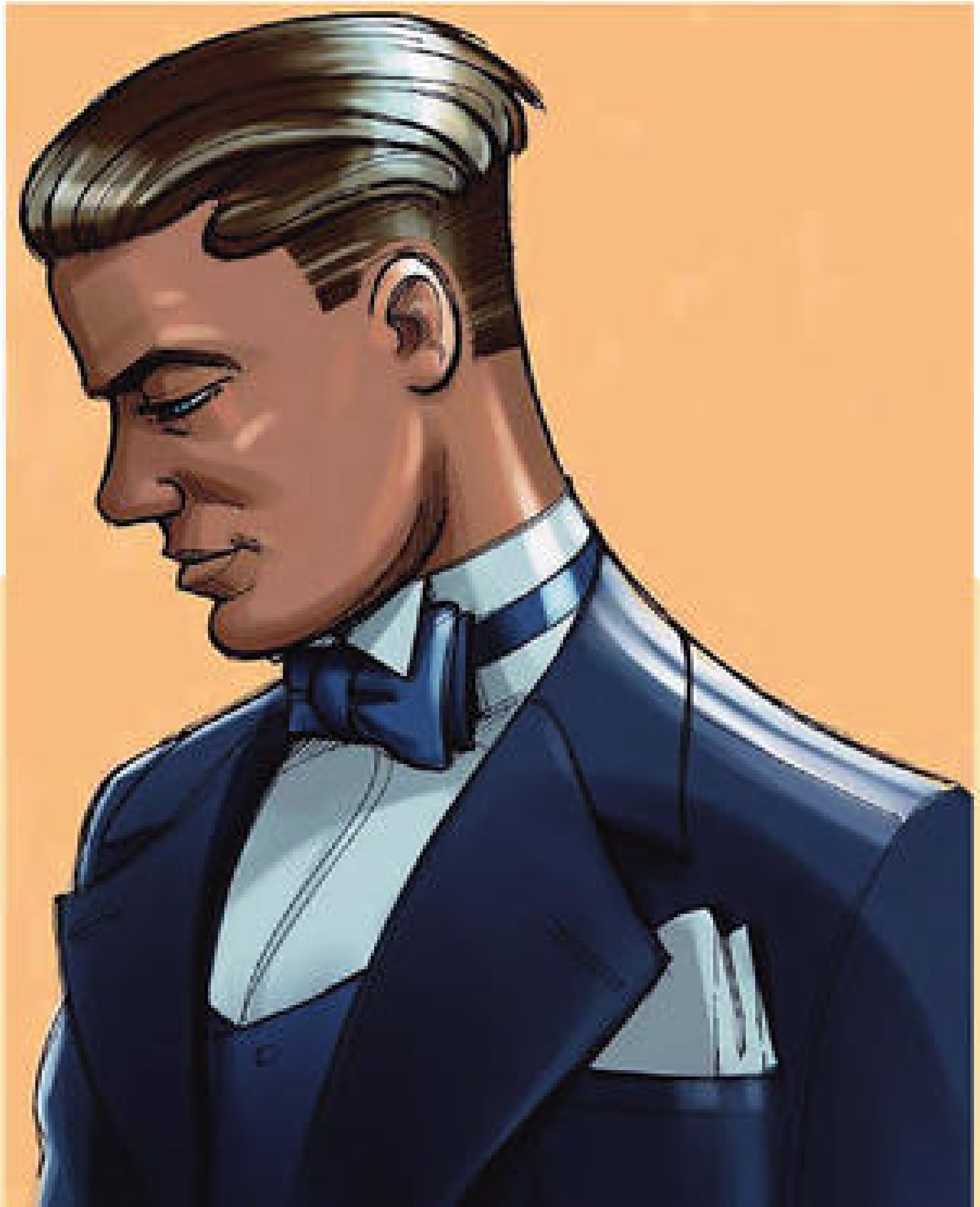


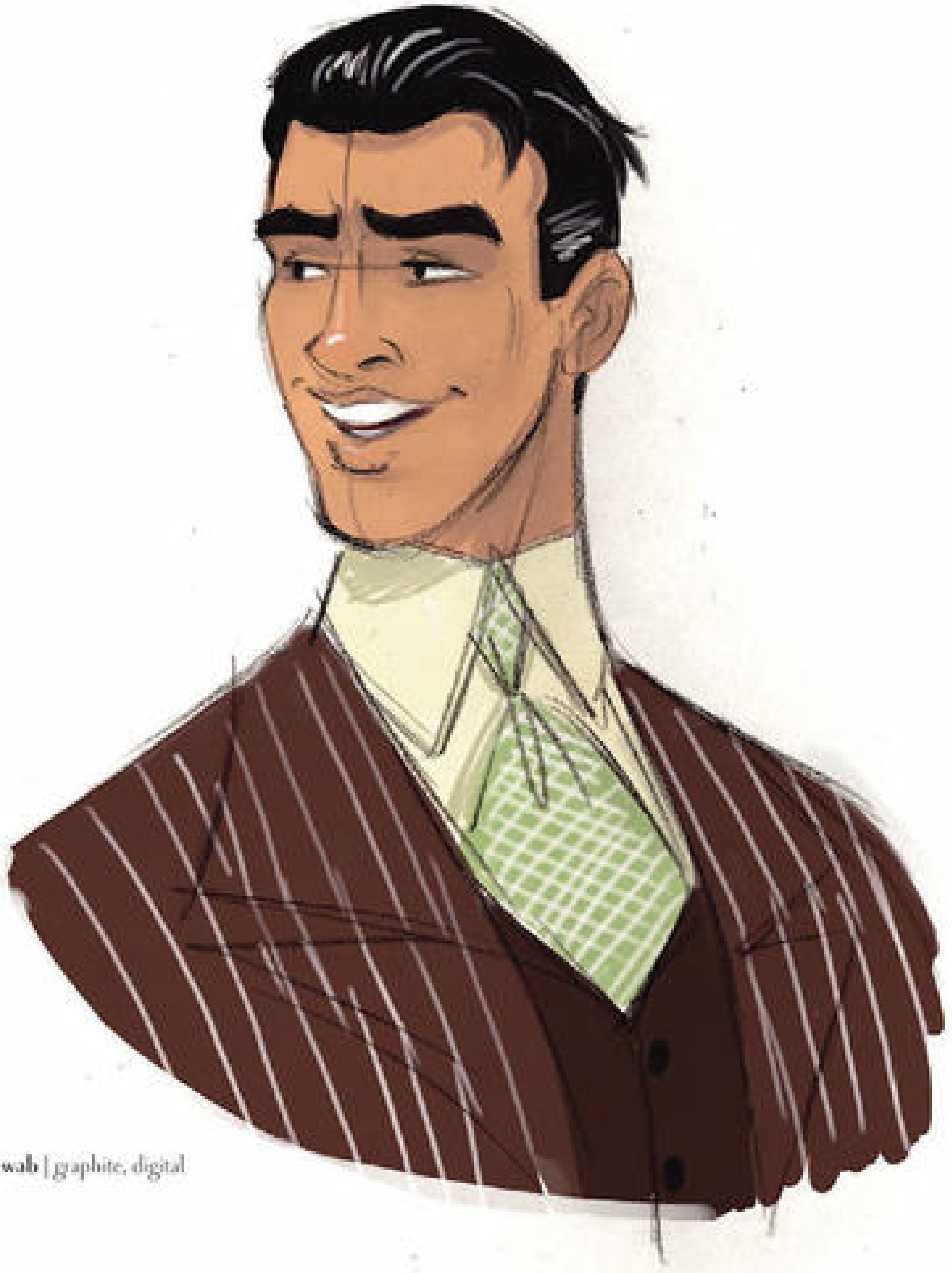
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



Juliet Stroud-Duncan | graphite

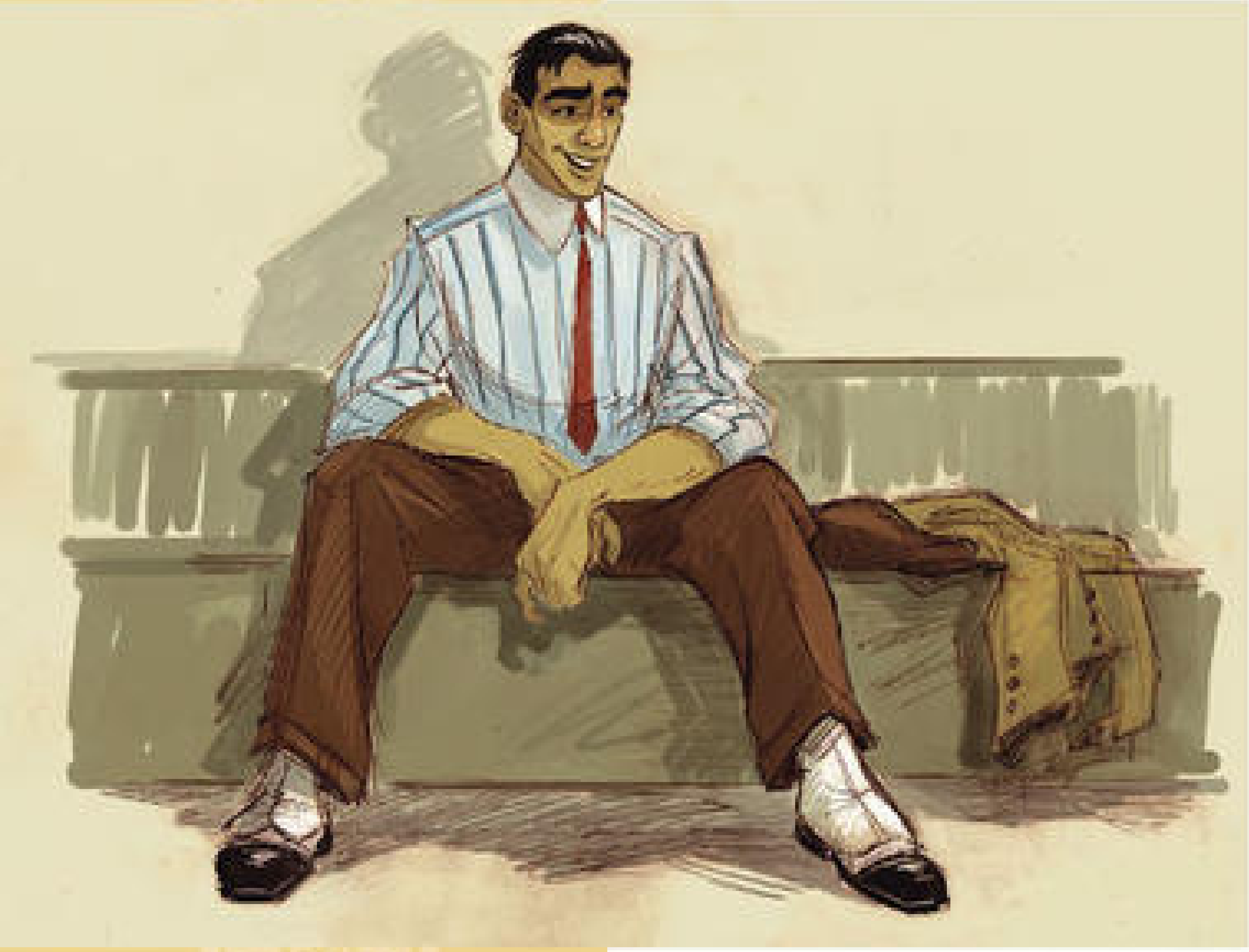
Sue Nichols | digital





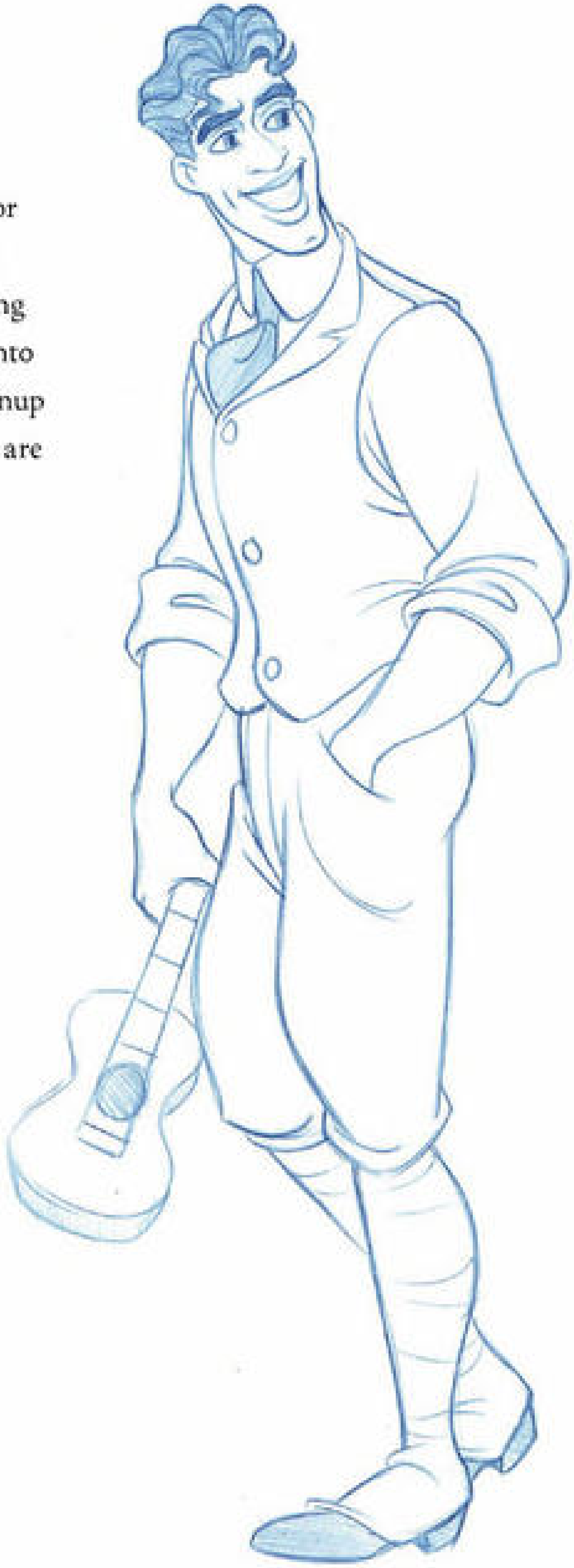
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

"I had a lot of fun with Naveen. He is supposed to be very handsome and suave—there is a very specific look of a debonair man in the 1920s. I was going off of a lot of the 1920s movies where a dapper look is very different than what dapper would look like today."
—SUE NICHOLS, visual development artist

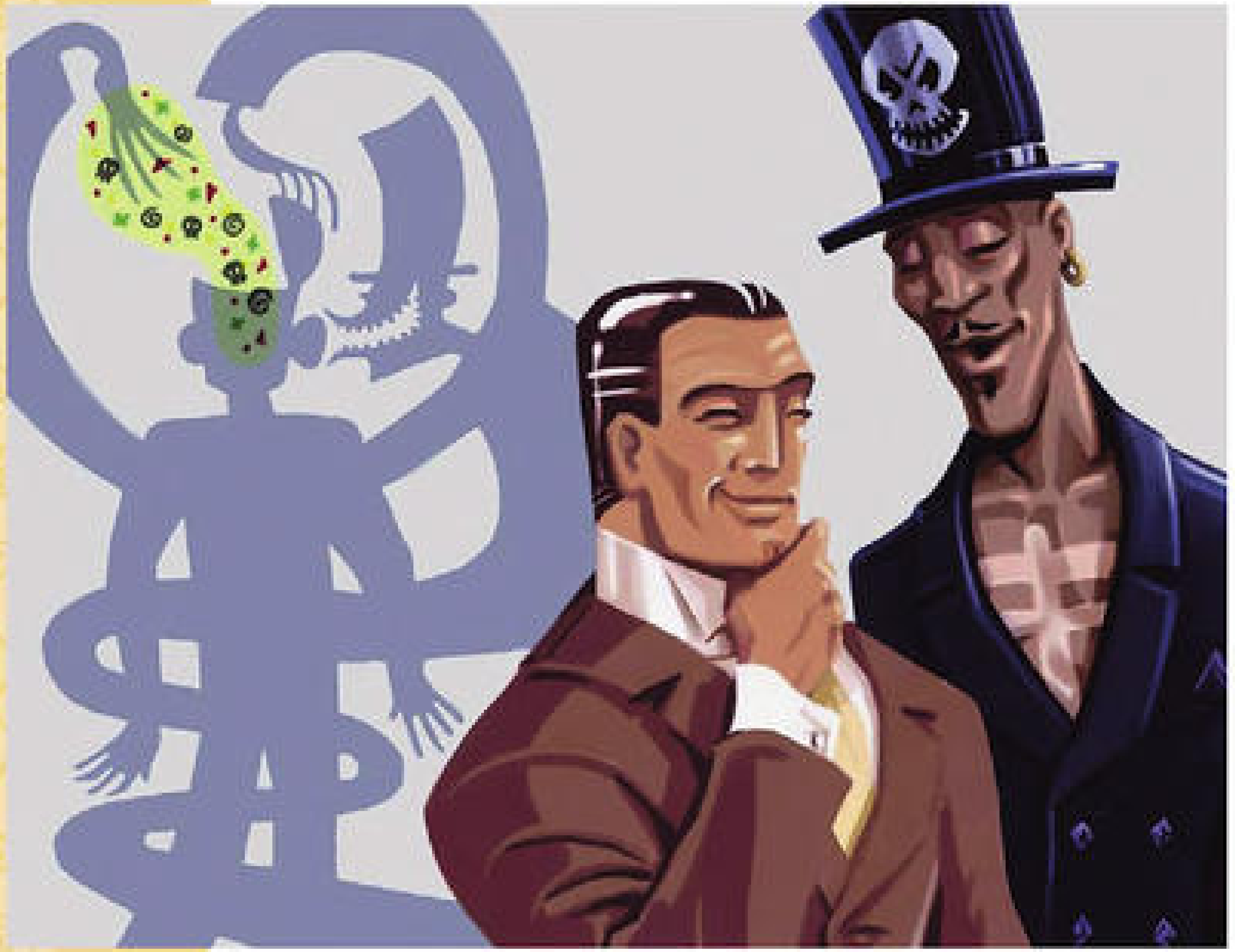


Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

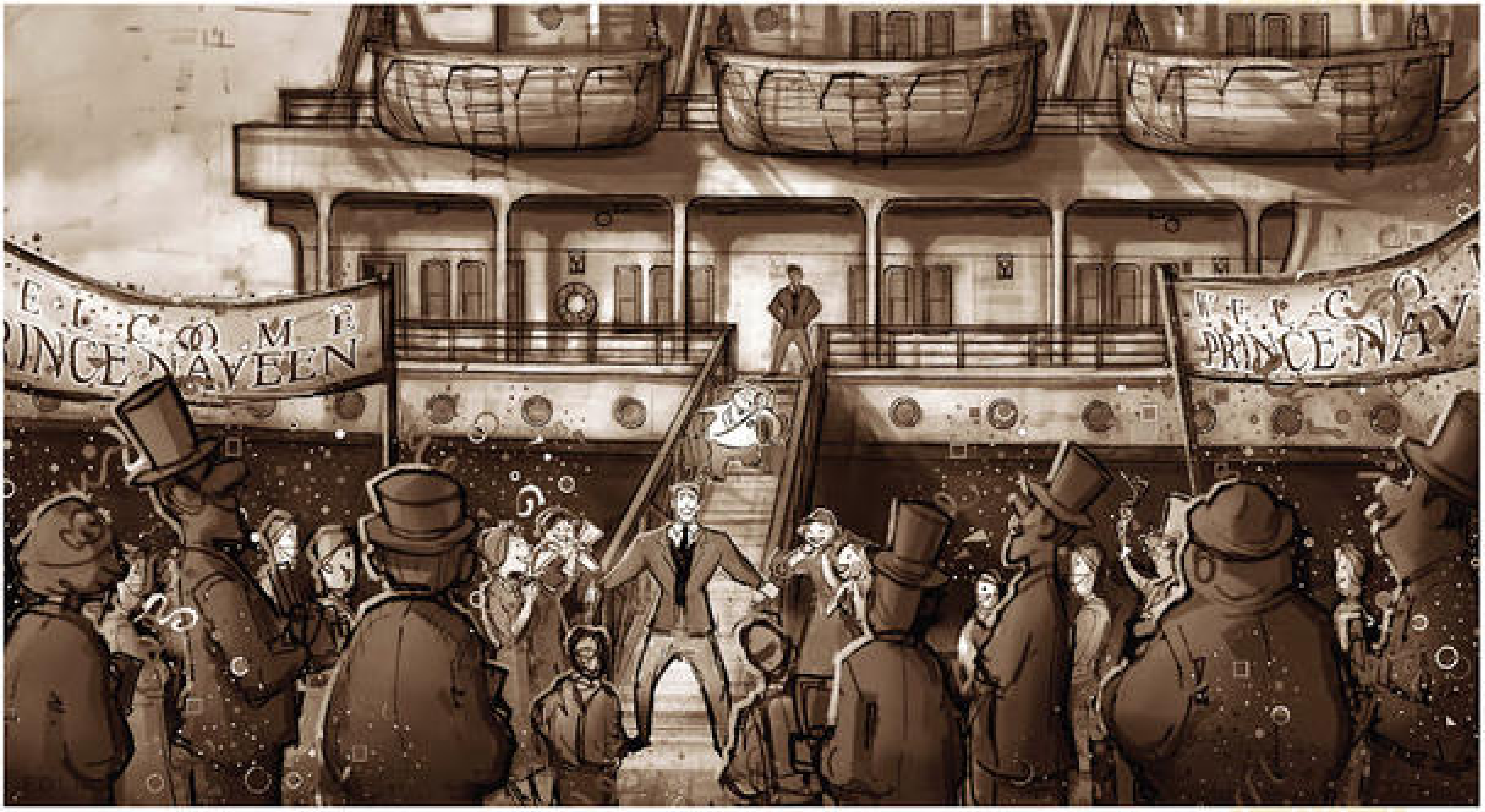
> "It is our job to take what the animator draws and translate that into a clean drawing keeping the exact same acting and emotion that he or she has put into it. That is why I love working in Cleanup Animation—because those drawings are what the whole world will see!"
>
> —Vera Lanpher-Pacheco,
> head of cleanup



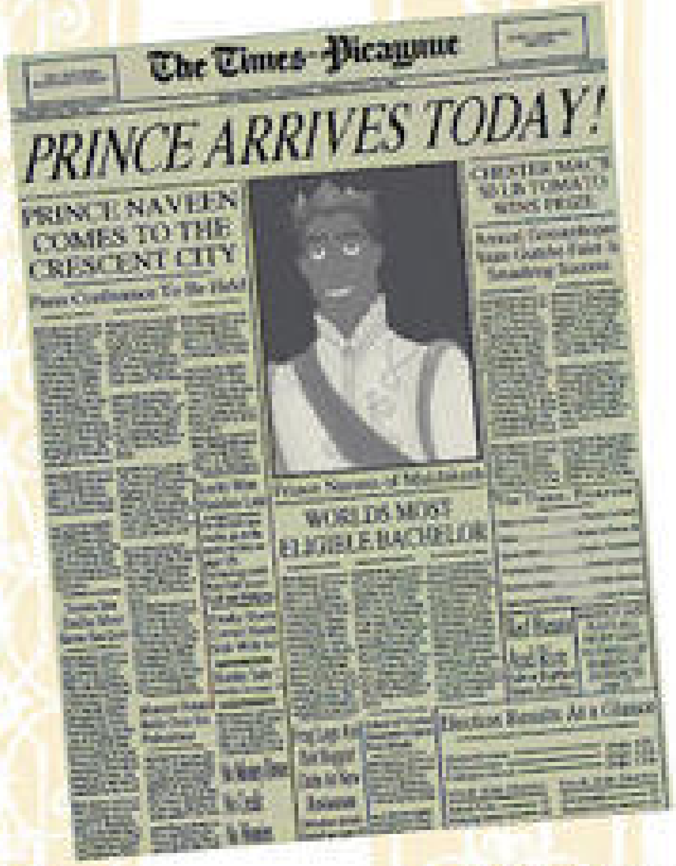
Randy Haycock | graphite



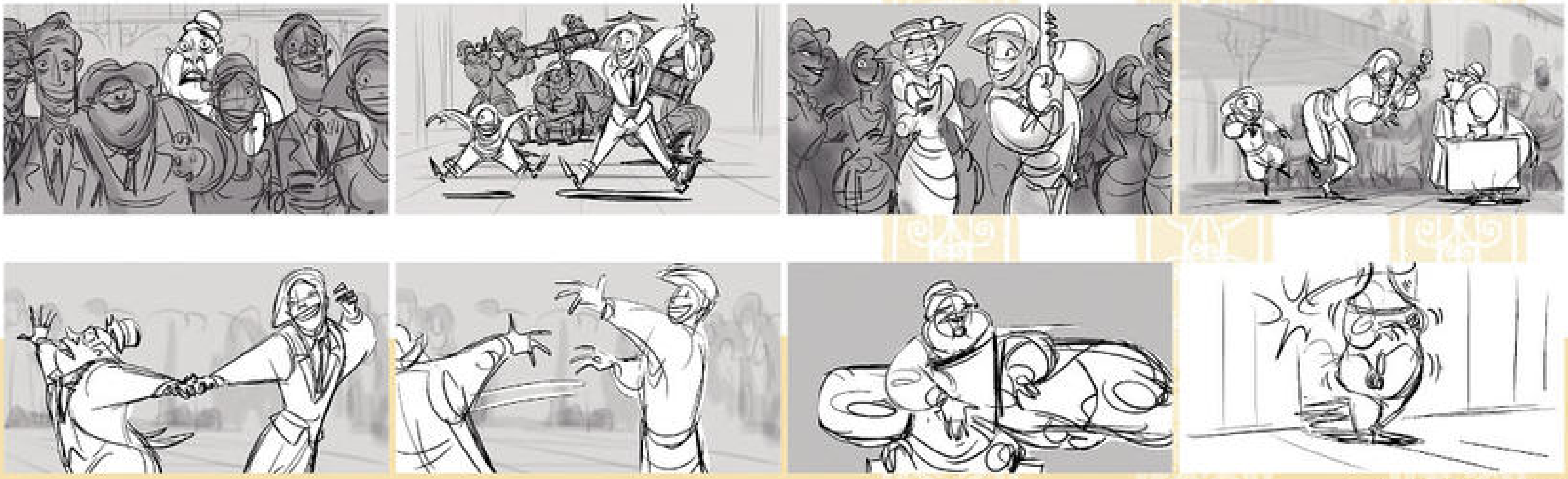
Sue Nichols | digital


WELCOME PRINCE NAVEEN
WELCOME PRINCE NAV

Moment | **Ed Li** | digital


The Times-Picayune
PRINCE ARRIVES TODAY!
PRINCE NAVEEN COMES TO THE CRESCENT CITY
Press Conference To Be Held
CHESTER MAC'S SILK TOMATO WINS PRIZE
Prince Naveen of Maldonia
WORLDS MOST ELIGIBLE BACHELOR
Election Results At a Glance

Lorelay Bove | digital



Storyboards | **Toby Shelton** | digital

LAWRENCE

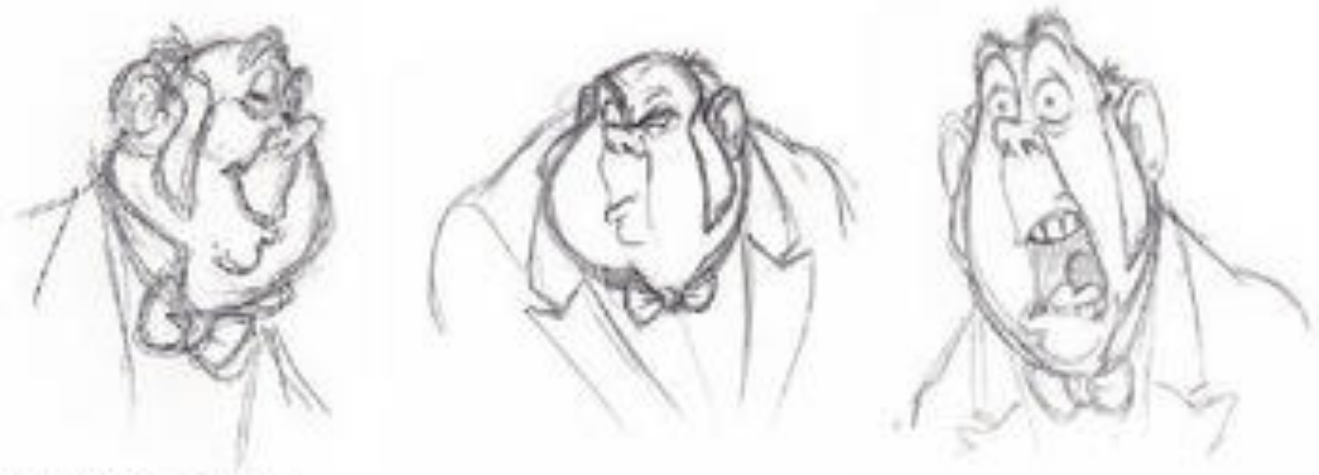
Portly, comported, and just a bit pompous, Lawrence would at first blush appear to be a stock sidekick, a stuffed-shirt majordomo with a bull's-eye on his back, ready-made for those who like to throw darts at the ostentatious.

However, the nuance of his character proves that he is more than meets the eye. As a royal manservant of a great tradition, he is not only frustrated by his master's disregard of noble protocol, he is personally more concerned with the status and position that Naveen blithely disregards, even discards, than is the prince himself.

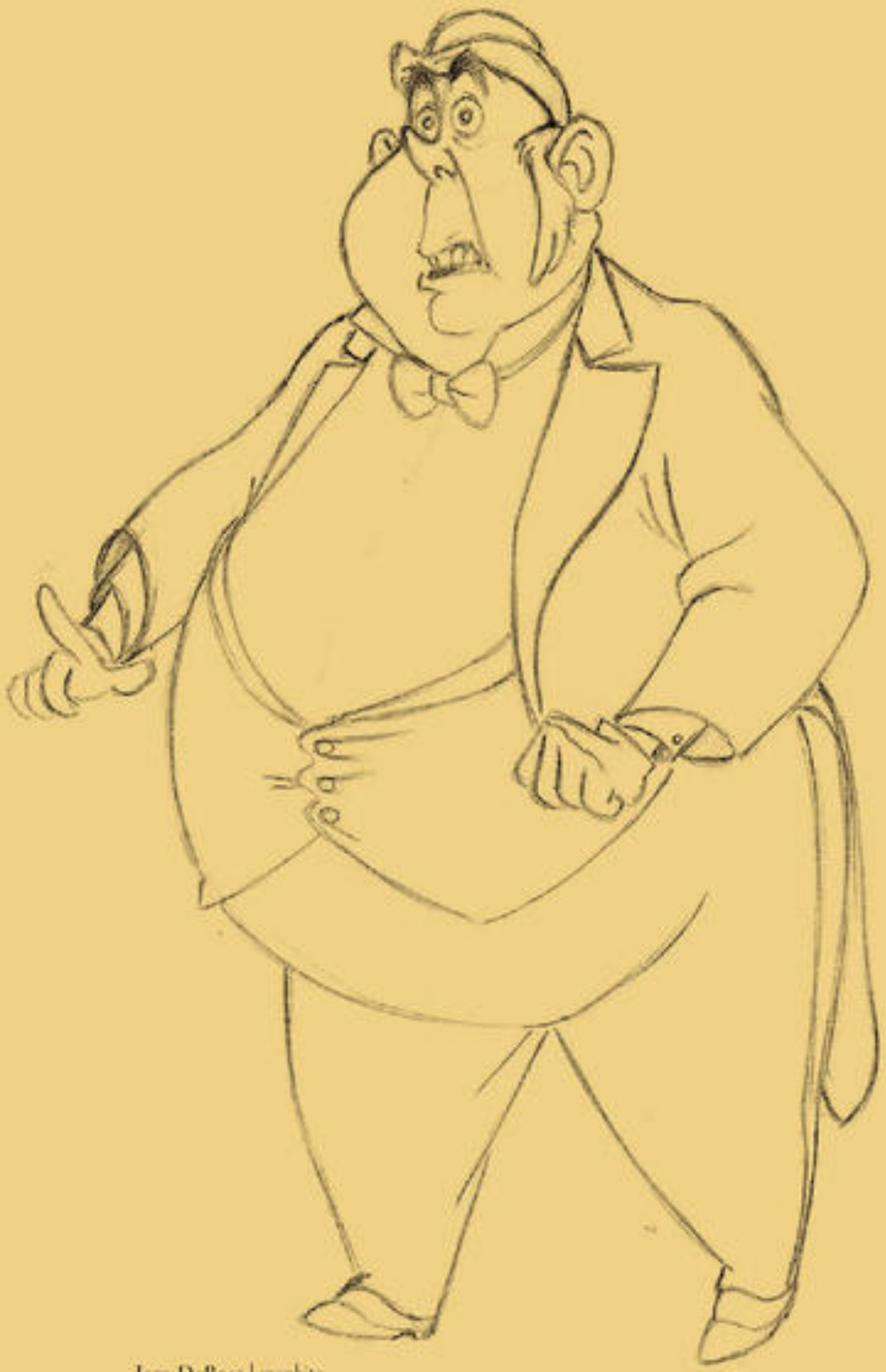
This combination of frustration and envy makes Lawrence the perfect instrument for a villain's designs on the royal heir, a willing and even sometimes enthusiastic accomplice to a shadowy figure of dark purpose.

"Lawrence feels like he would do better being the prince," supervising animator Tony DeRosa says, "and he probably would. That's what Lawrence reacts to—that the prince is not acting very princely. He's dancing in the street, palling around with the common people. Lawrence wouldn't do that if he were a prince.

"He has had the life of royalty, he lived in a beautiful palace, and all of a sudden he's hauling Naveen's bags in humid and hot New Orleans. Essentially he has been forced to give up a royal life to follow the prince and carry his suitcases."

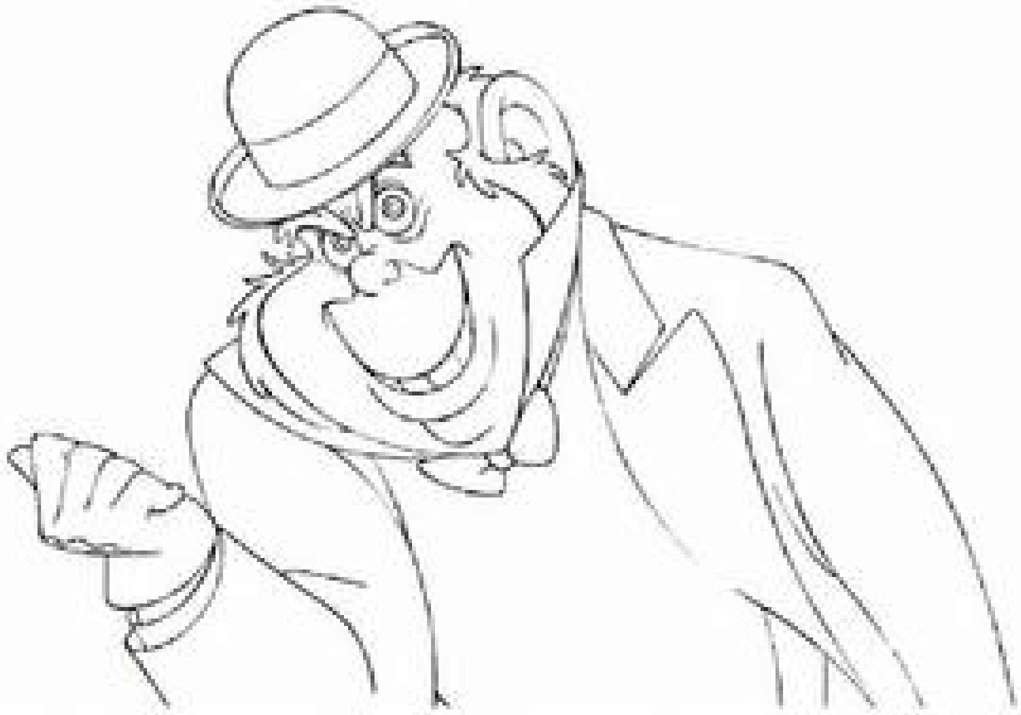


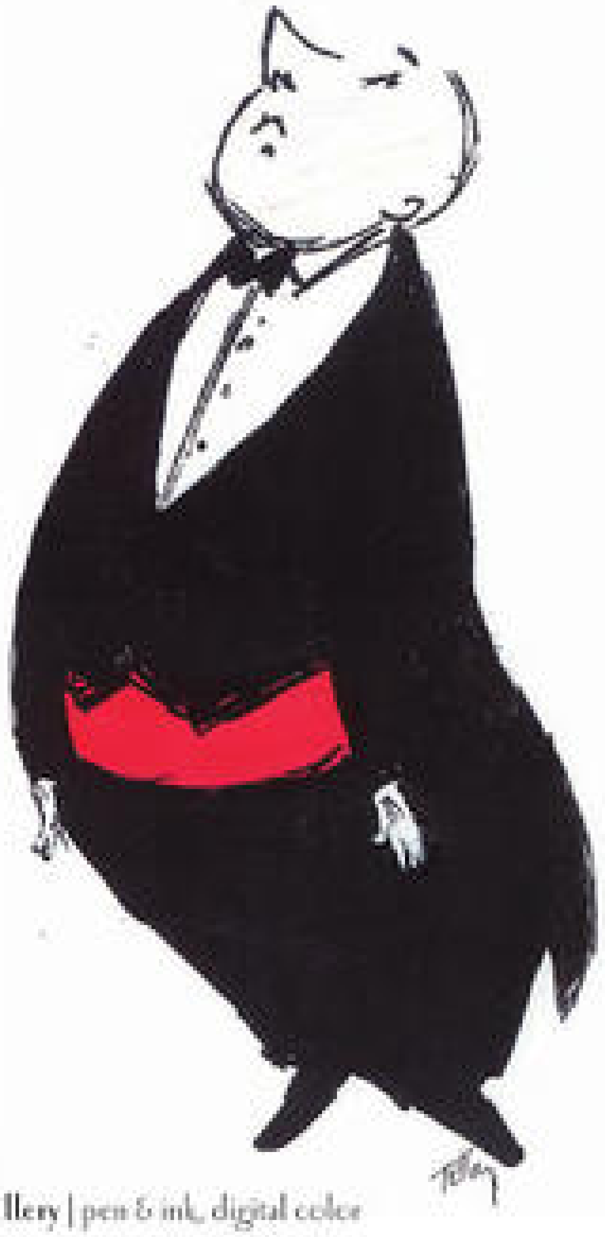
Tony DeRosa | graphite

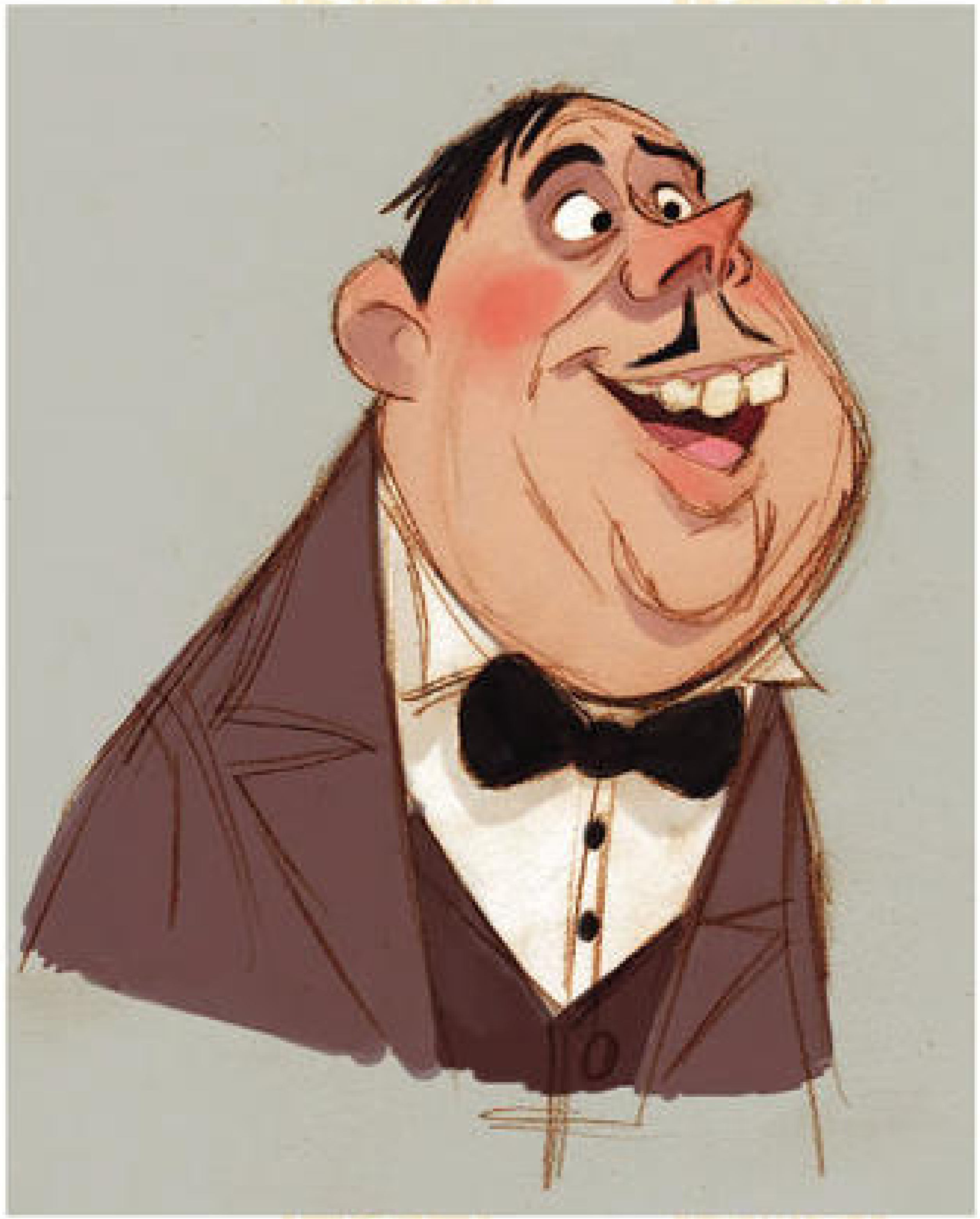


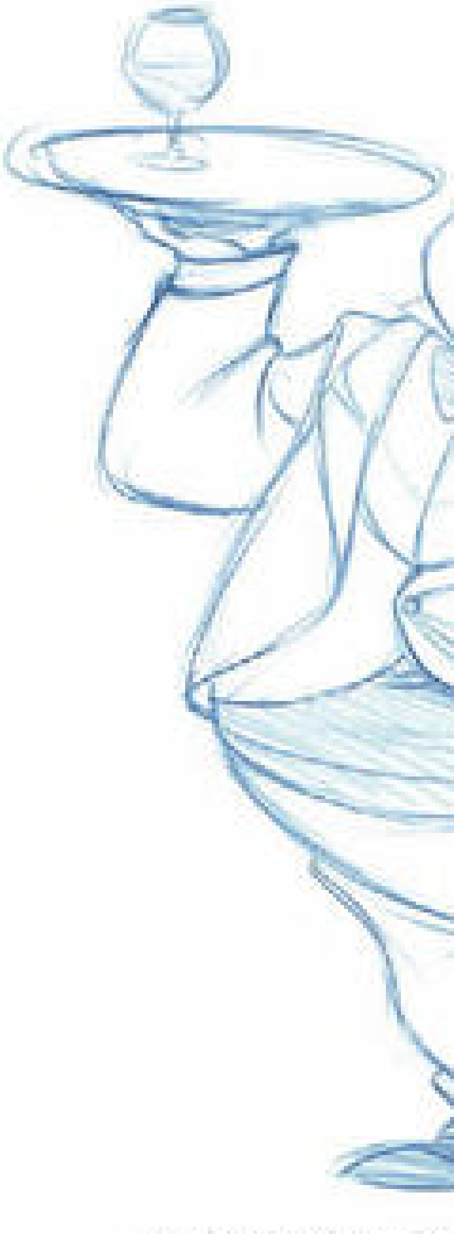
Tony DeRosa | graphite

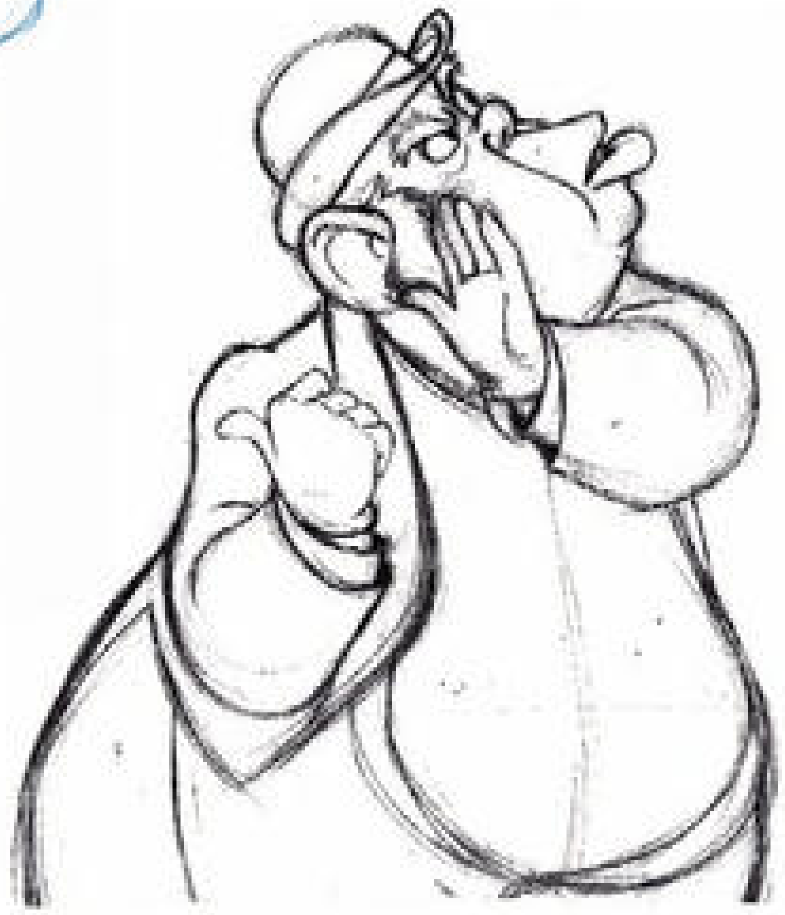
"Animating the character of Lawrence, Prince Naveen's self-absorbed valet, has been a joy. It's also been a great honor and privilege to work on this film. I trust that the passion and love brought to this work will be experienced by all who watch."
—TONY DEROSA, supervising animator

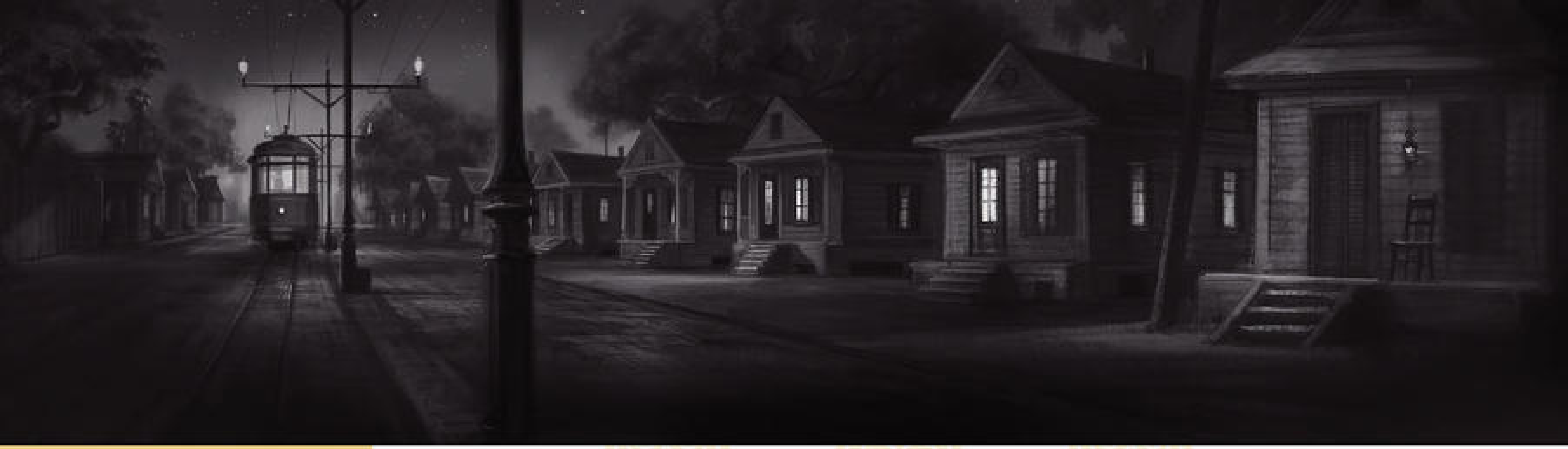

Lieve Miessen | graphite


Tom Ellery | pen & ink, digital color

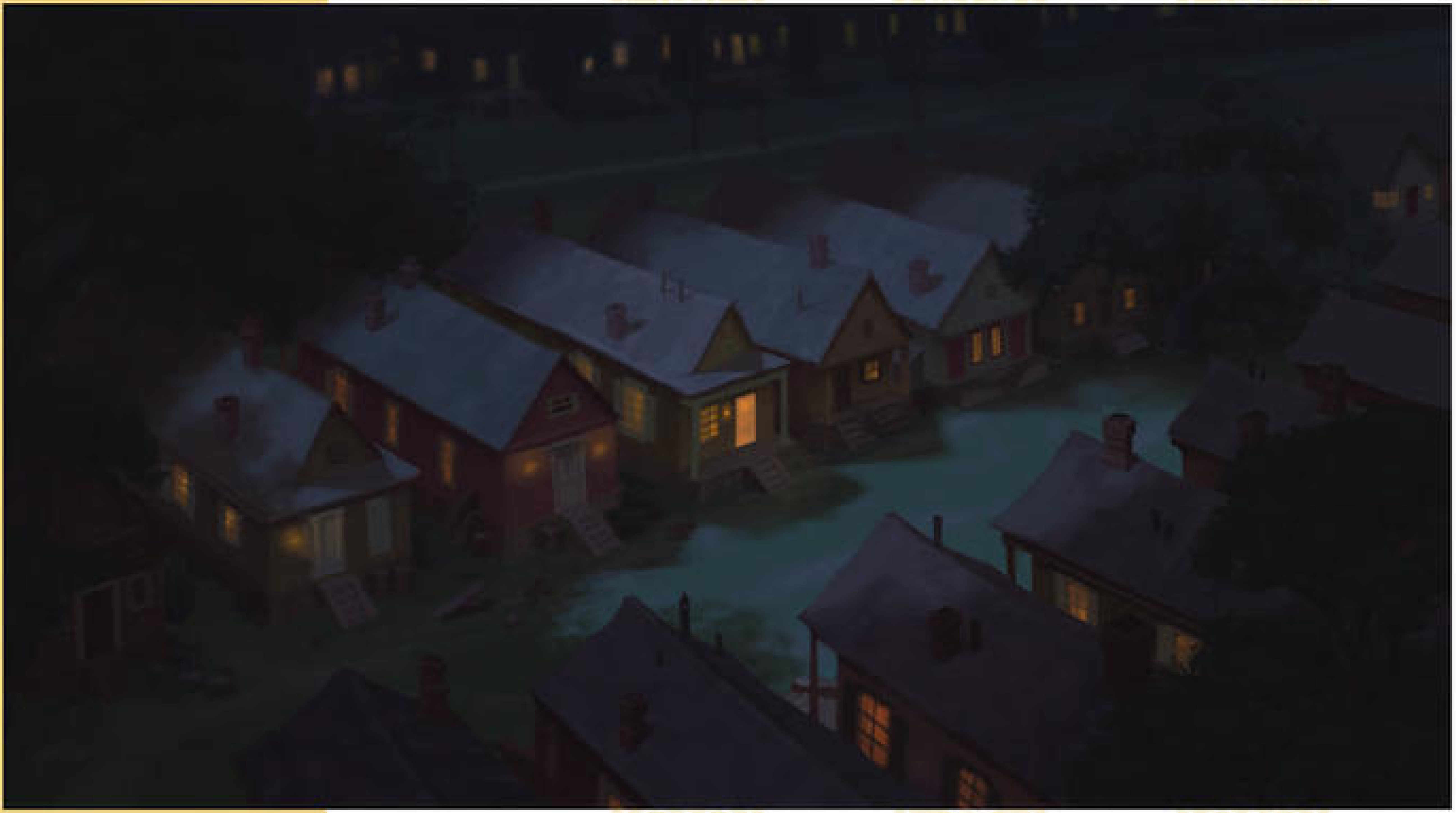

Bill Schwab | graphite, digital


Randy Haycock | graphite


Tony DeRosa | graphite



James Aaron Finch | digital

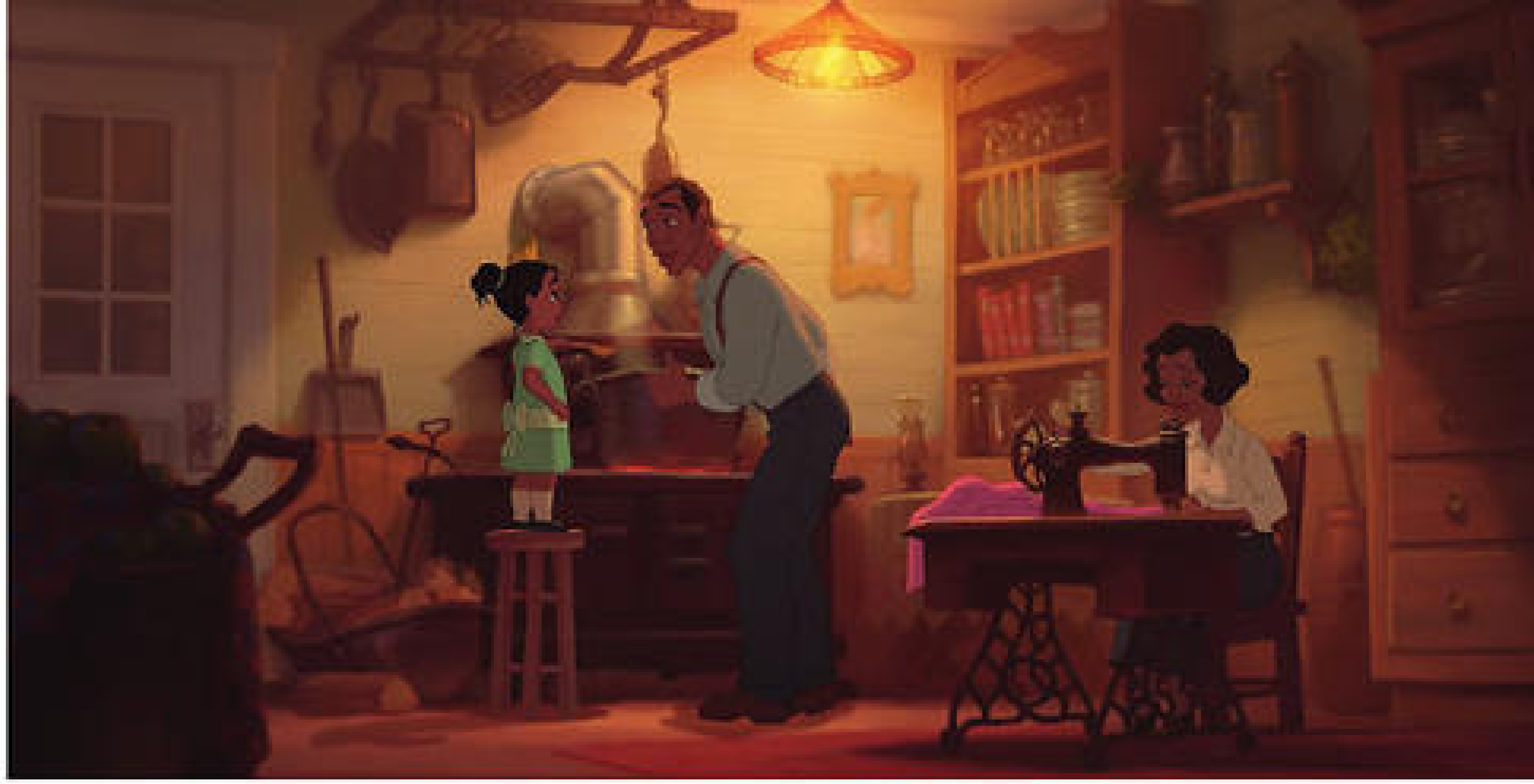


Sai Ping Lok | digital

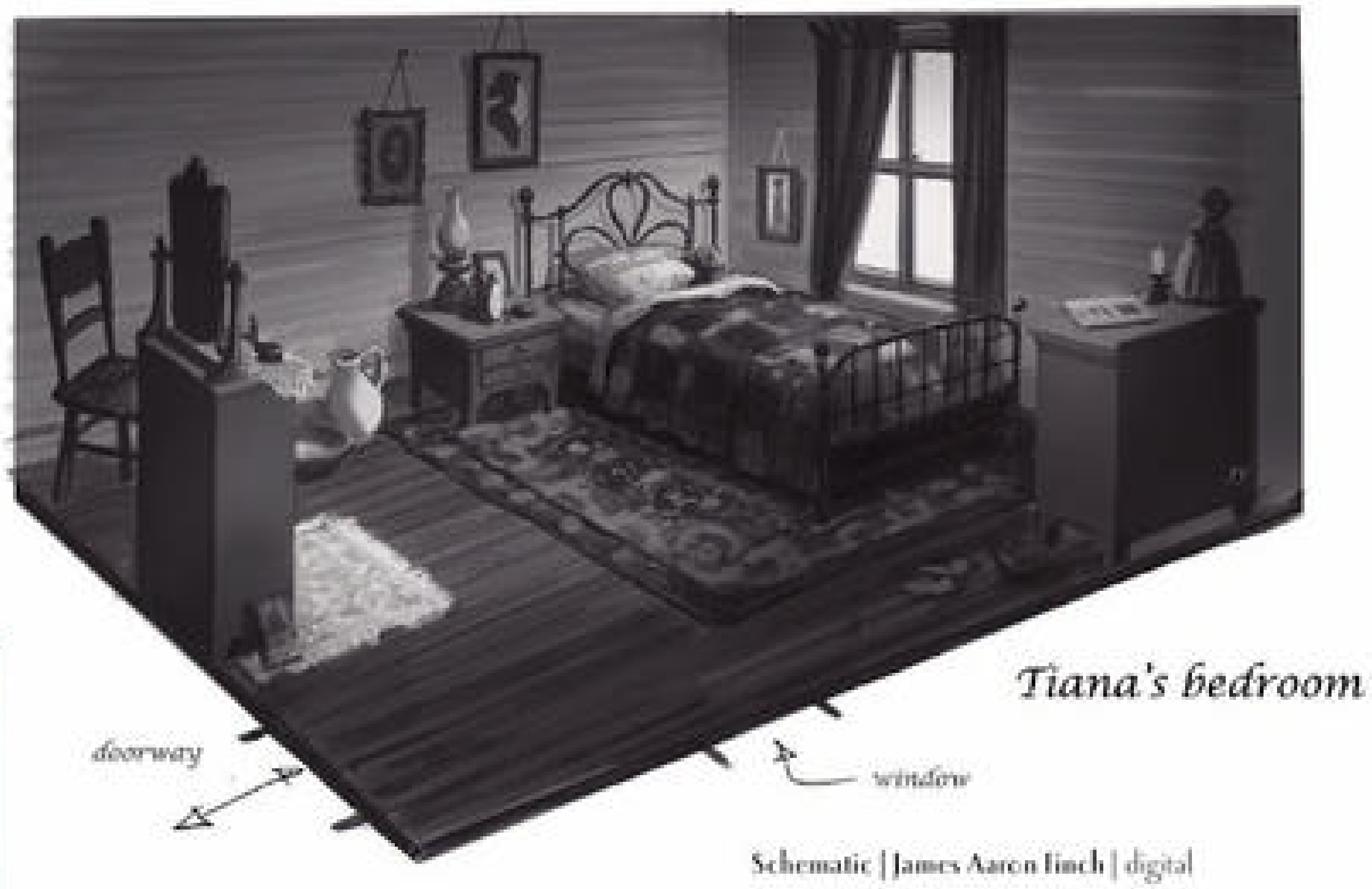
THE NINTH WARD

On the north side of the Mississippi River, the Ninth Ward is the easternmost downriver portion of New Orleans. It is geographically the largest of the seventeen wards of New Orleans. Like Harlem in New York and Auburn Avenue in Atlanta, the Ninth Ward is a virtual museum of civil rights history and cultural achievement, specifically a "Who's Who" of the greatest musicians America has ever produced. Louis Armstrong, Fats Domino, Mahalia Jackson, Wynton Marsalis, Oliver Morgan, and many others called the Ninth Ward home.

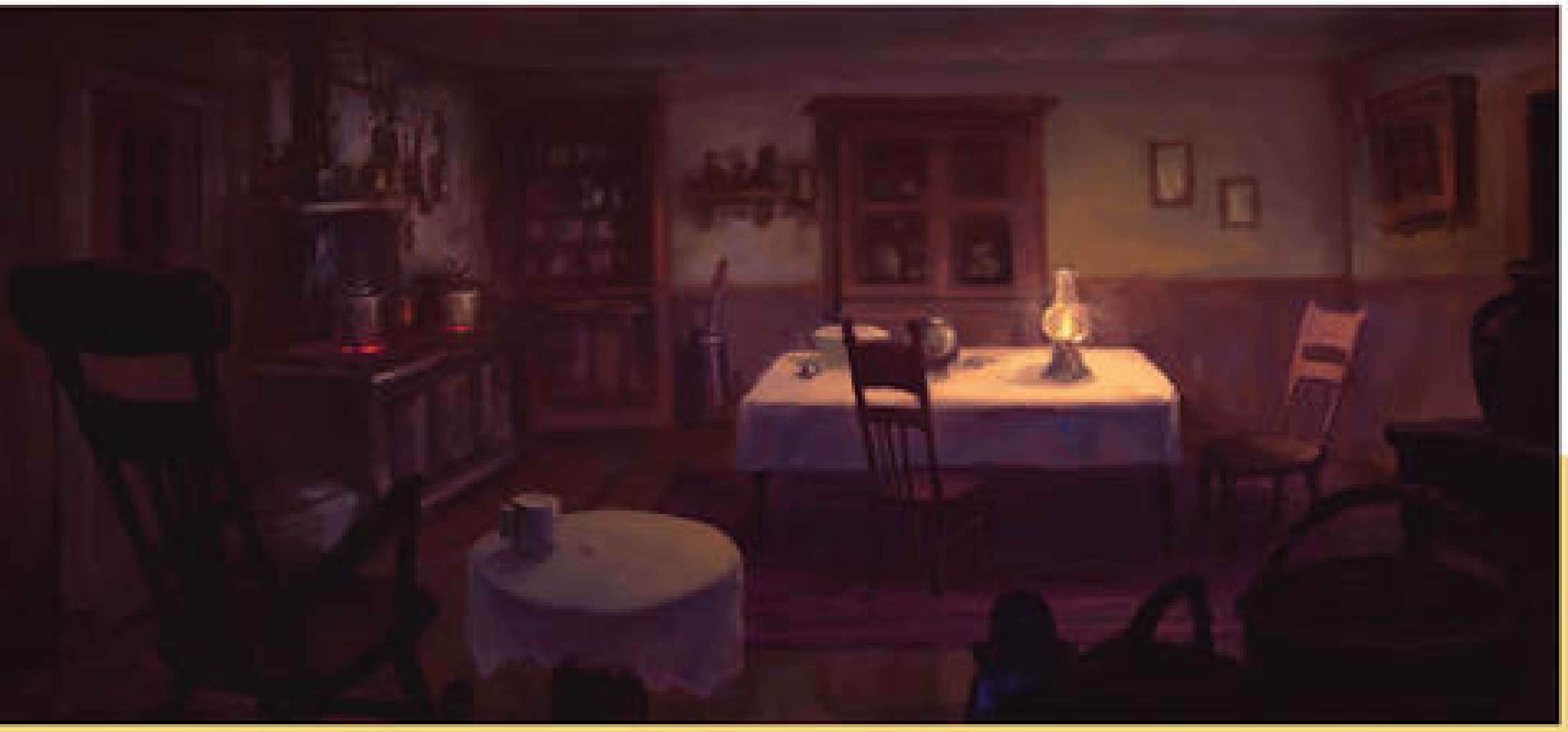
In 1920s New Orleans, the streets are tidy, but certainly not elegant. Houses are small, "shotgun" style, long and narrow, with shallow yards and porches. In the film, the St. Charles streetcar bustles and rattles past a small, modest, but warm house. This is home to Tiana, daughter of Eudora, the finest seamstress in the city, and James, a hard-working father and husband with a passion for cooking.



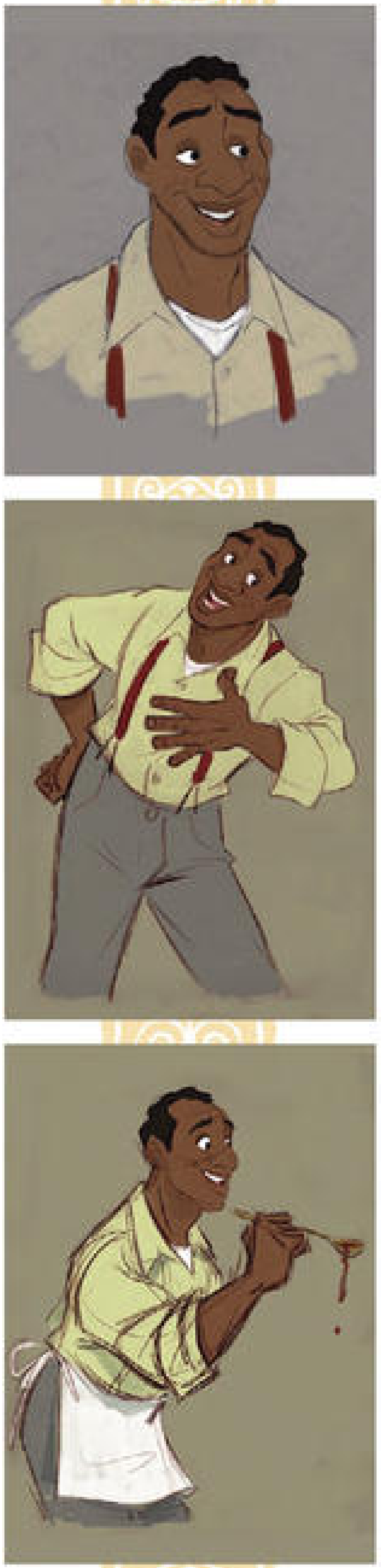
Color Styling/Compositing | digital



Schematic | James Aaron Finch | digital



Sunny Apinchapong | digital



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

JAMES AND EUDORA

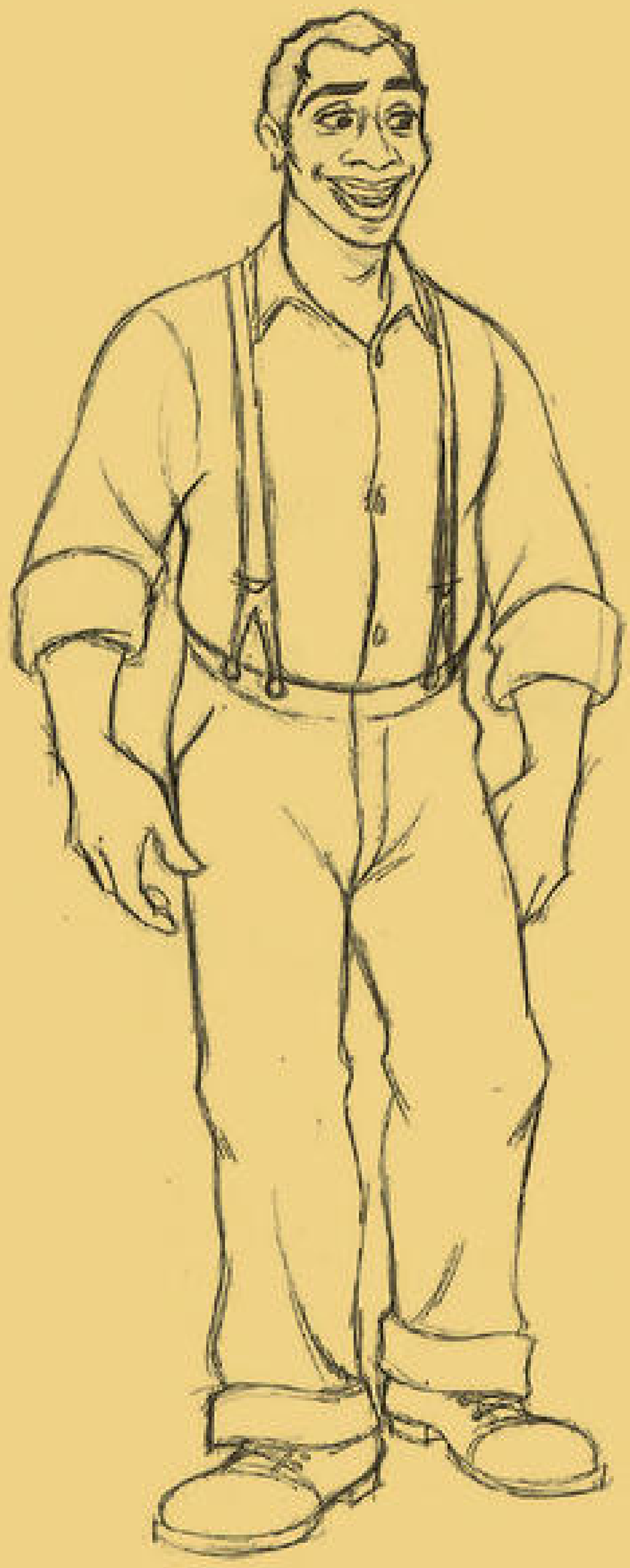
Tiana's parents are deftly drawn and important. "They don't have much screen time," supervising animator Ruben Aquino says, "but I always think of characters like that as very important for the emotional storyline."

Tiana's relationships with her father, James, and her mother, Eudora, motivate her life. As a girl, her happiest moments are spent with James and Eudora, cooking with James or playing in the home of one of Eudora's wealthy clients.

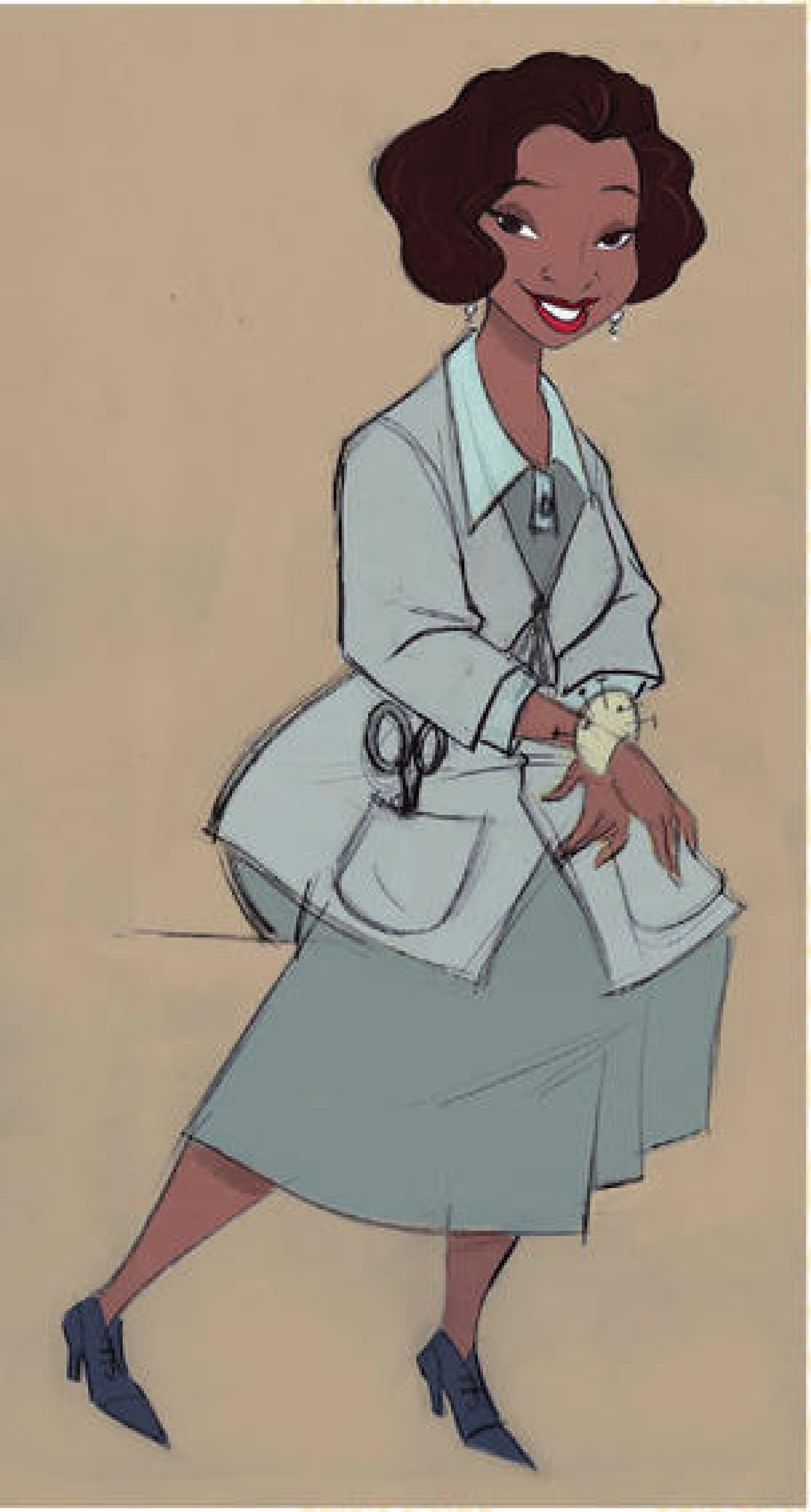
While Eudora is a pragmatist, Tiana's father, James, is a romantic.

James, an honest and reliable working man, and Tiana share a familiar bond among New Orleans residents: their love of good food. "You know," James tells little Tiana, "the thing about good food, it brings folks together from all walks of life. It warms 'em right up and puts little smiles on their faces . . . and when I open up my own restaurant, I tell you, people are gonna line up for miles around just to get a taste of my food!"

"*Our* food," Tiana lovingly corrects him. Together, Tiana and her daddy often visit a vacant and neglected, but still handsome sugar mill, where they share a dream of one day turning it into a fine restaurant.

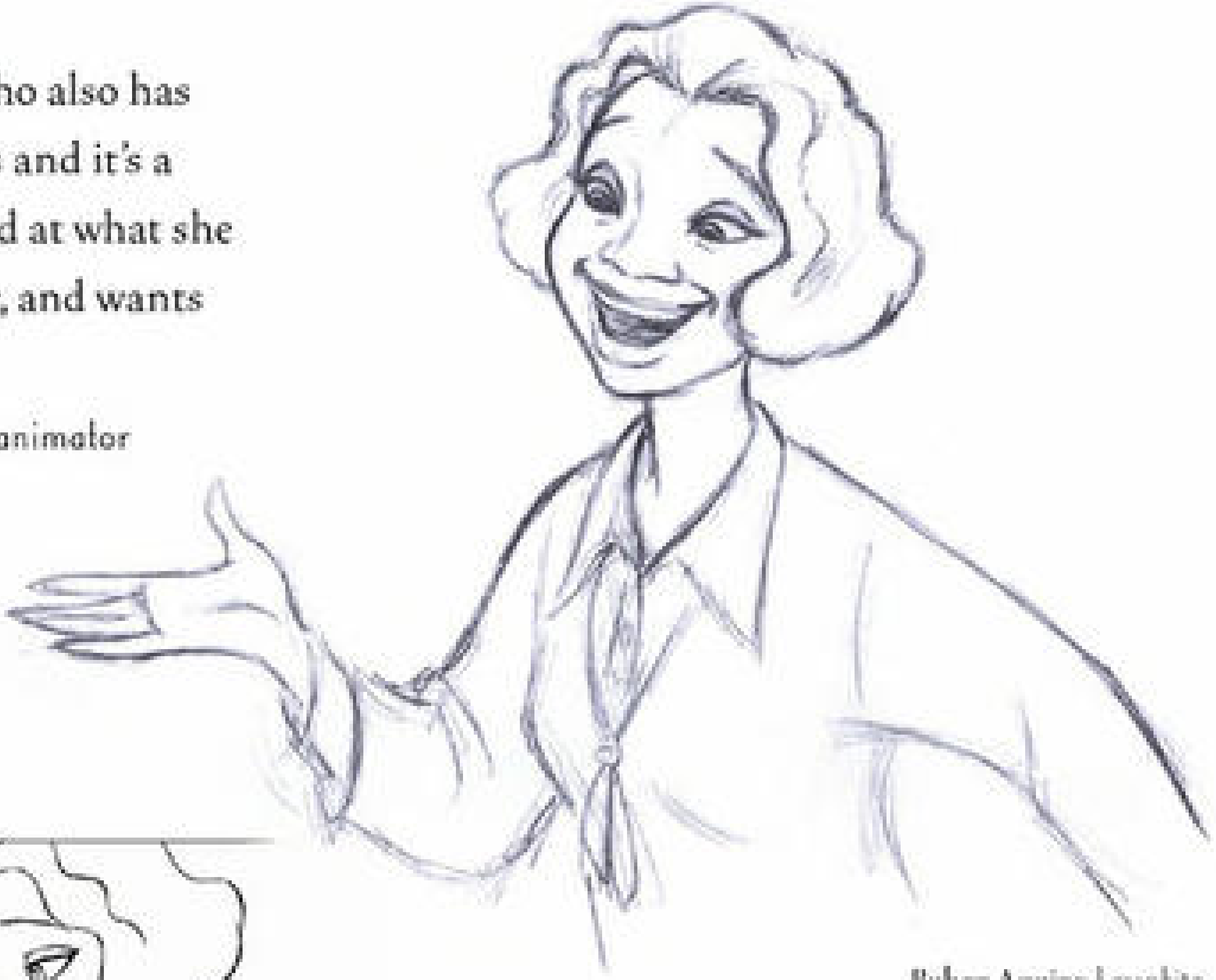


Ruben Aquino | graphite

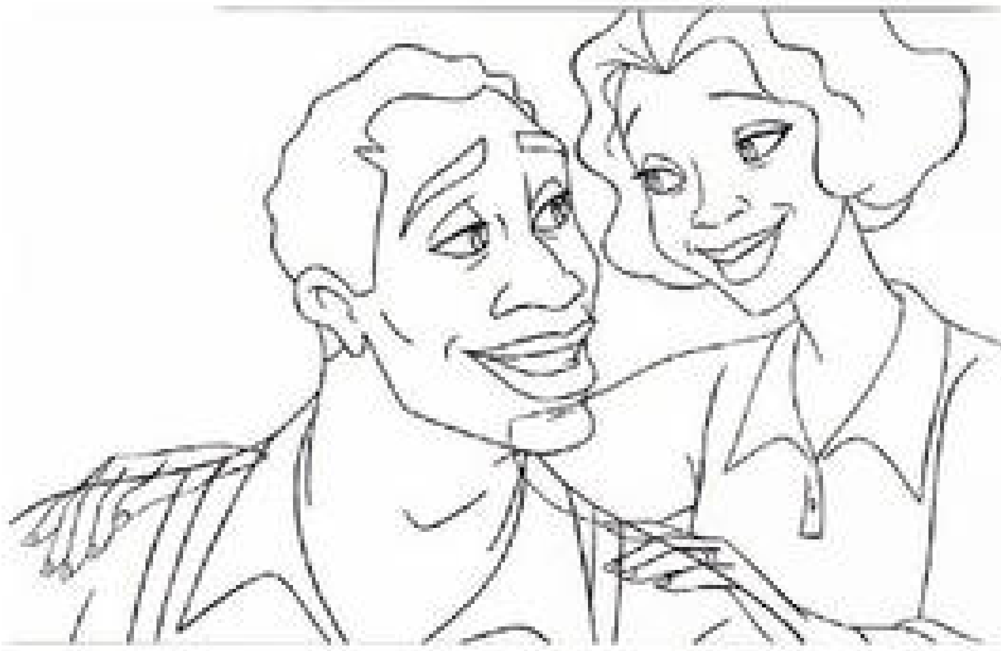


Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

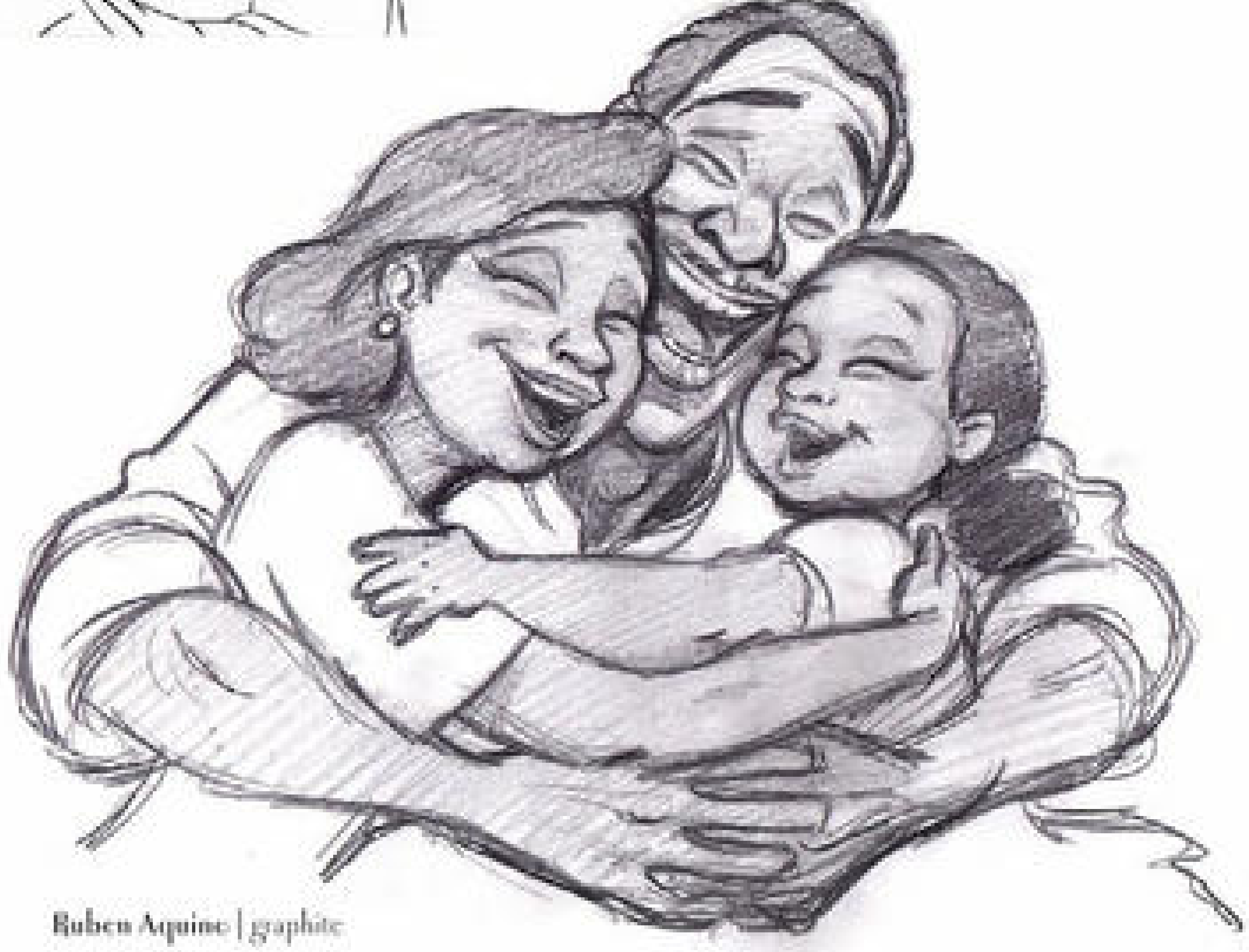
"Eudora is a nurturing mother who also has her own carer. She's a seamstress and it's a modest living, but she's very good at what she does, and she loves her daughter, and wants what's best for her, too."
—Ruben Aquino, supervising animator



Ruben Aquino | graphite



Marianne Tucker | graphite

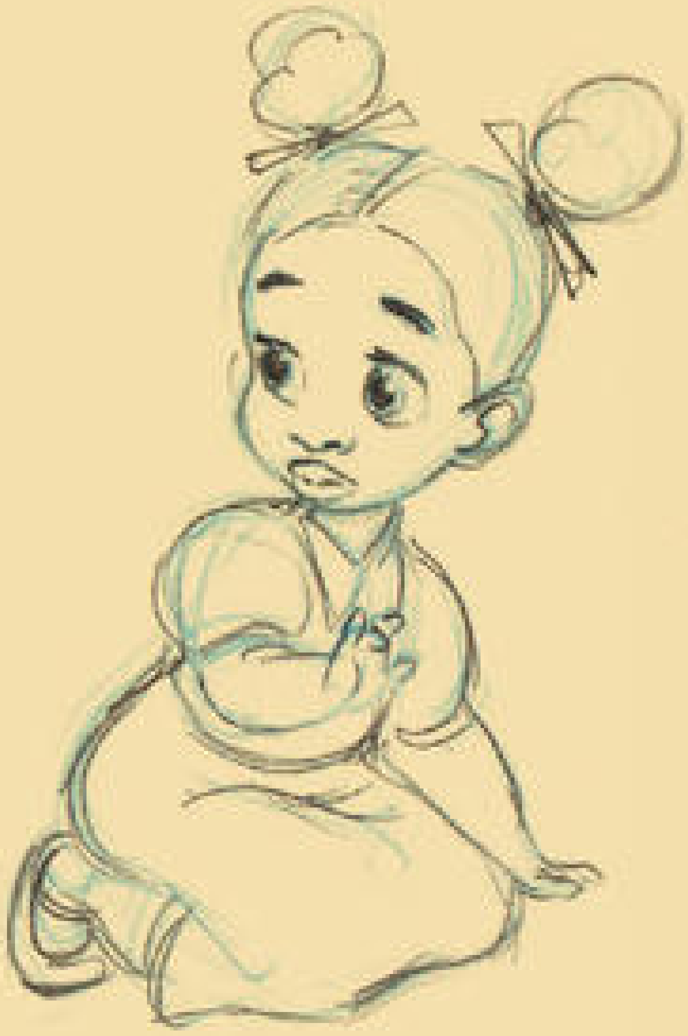


Ruben Aquino | graphite

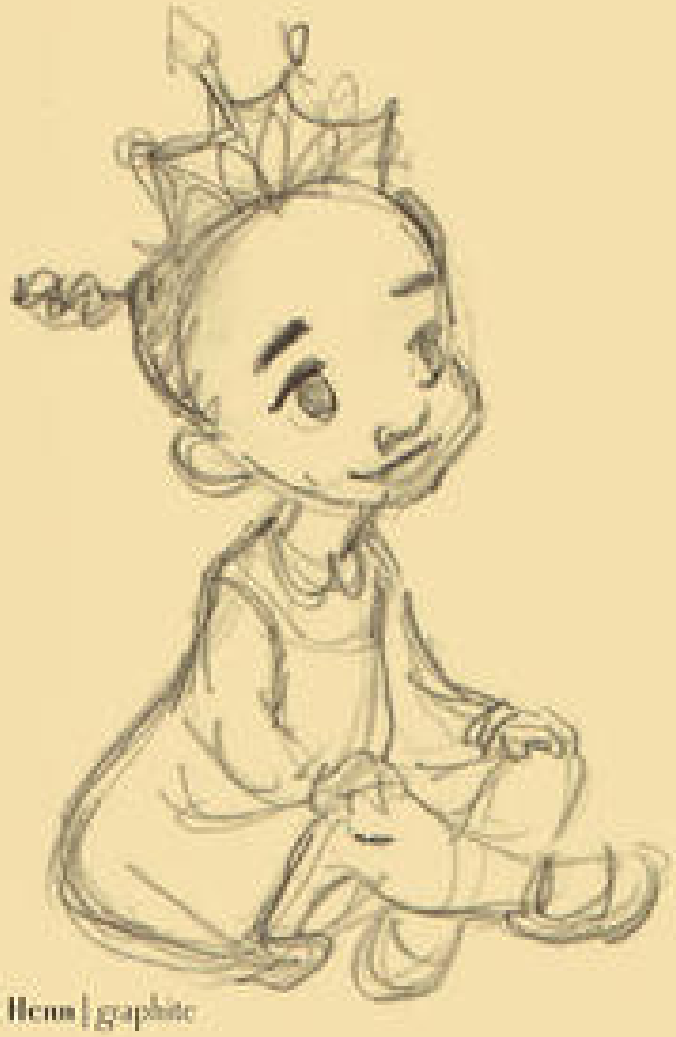
LITTLE TIANA

"In our movie, Tiana has three different incarnations," supervising animator Mark Henn says. "You have the little girl, young Tiana, then the adult Tiana—and then Frog Tiana. So there's been a few days where I never know who I'm going to be dealing with!

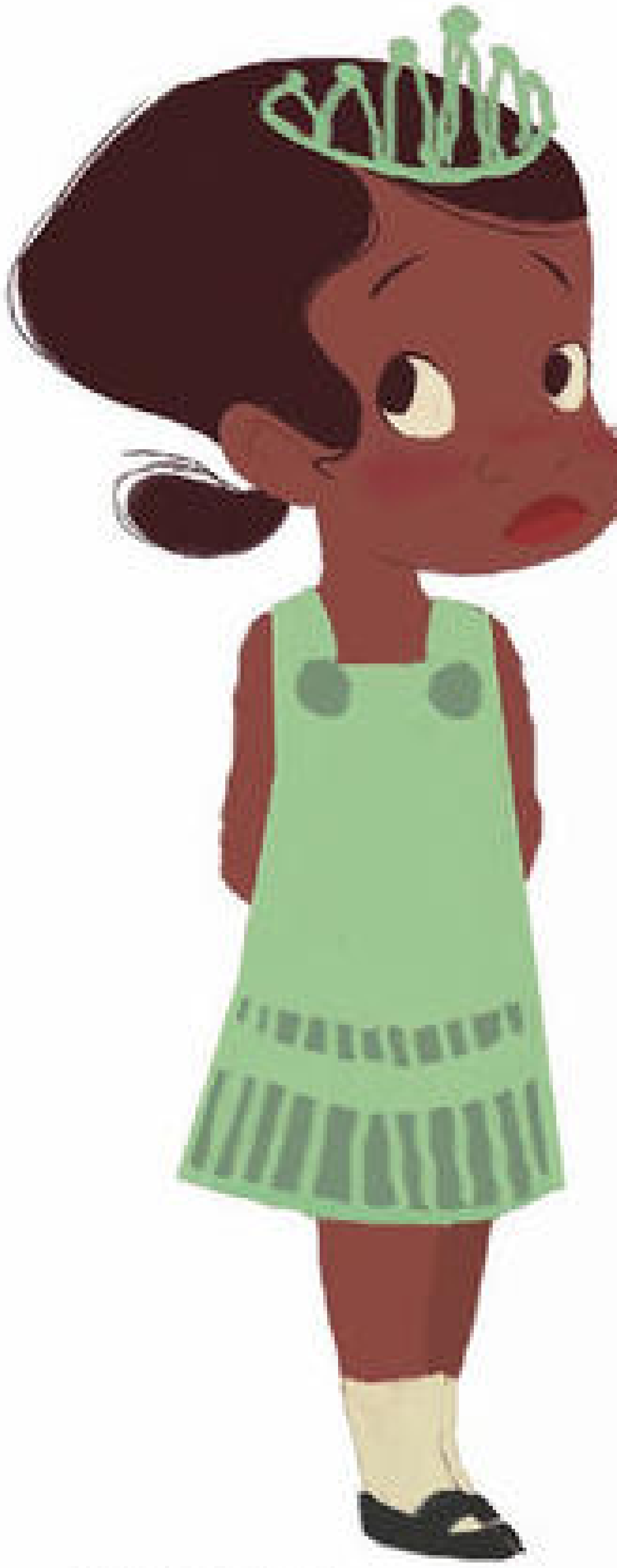
"It's all the same person, but it's oh, gosh, now she's a little girl, I've got to draw her as a little girl. Now she's an adult. Now she's a frog. So that's probably one of the most fun challenges with this. It's a little akin to when we had Ariel and how she was a mermaid and talked, and then had her with legs and she couldn't talk, which was what was kind of an interesting challenge. But that was not as big of a *literally* physical change that Tiana will face."



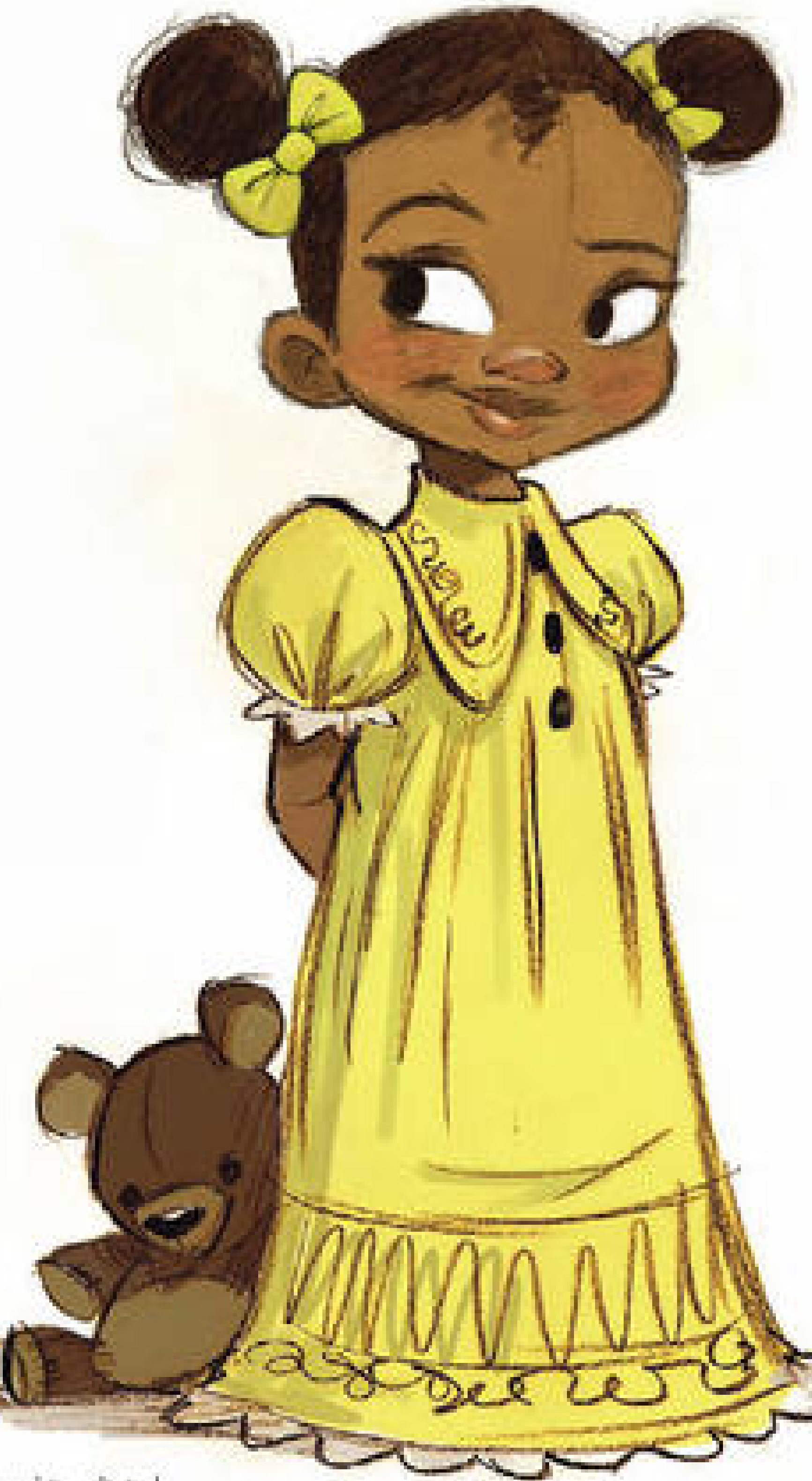
Mark Henn | graphite



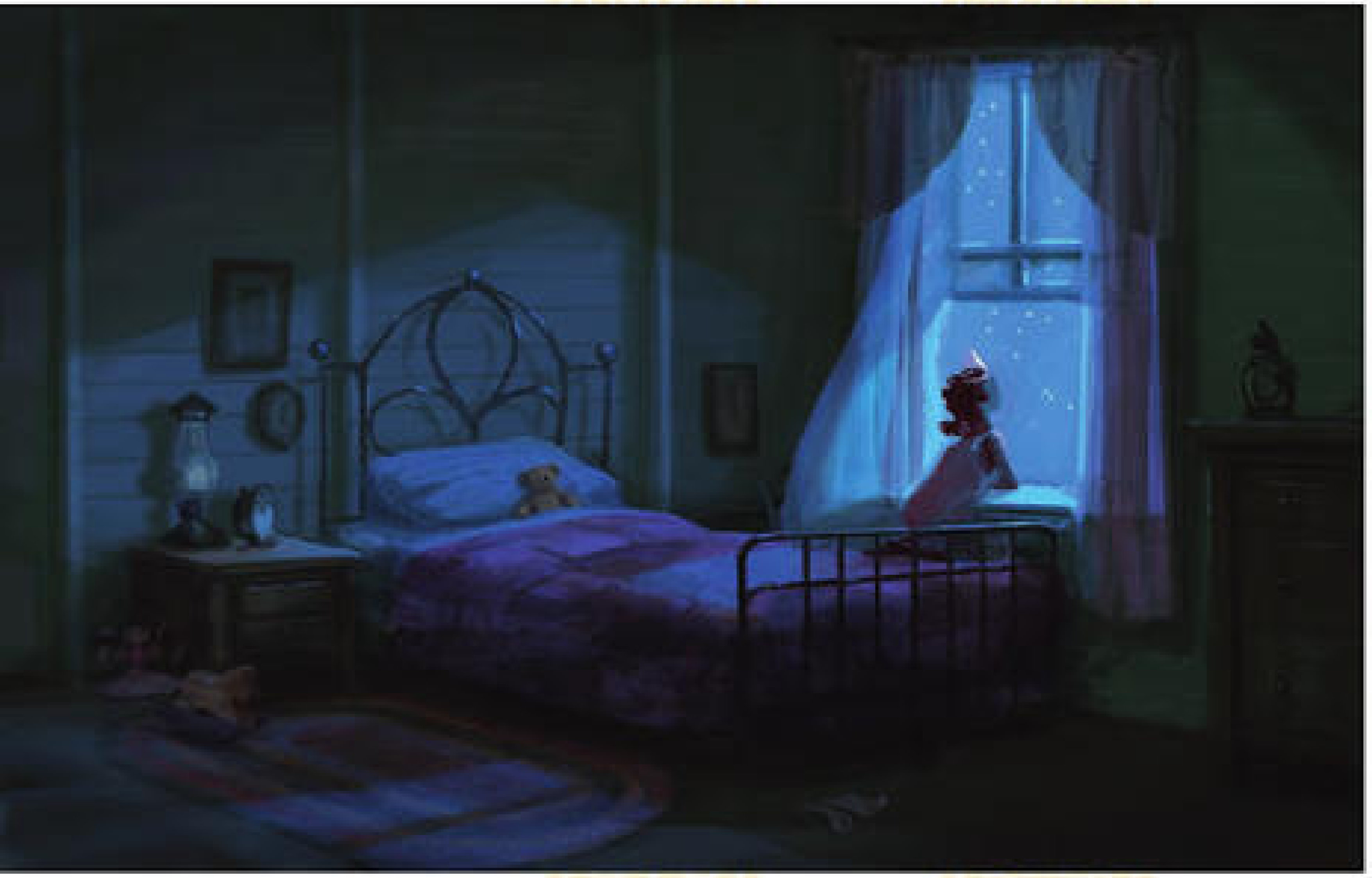
Mark Henn | graphite



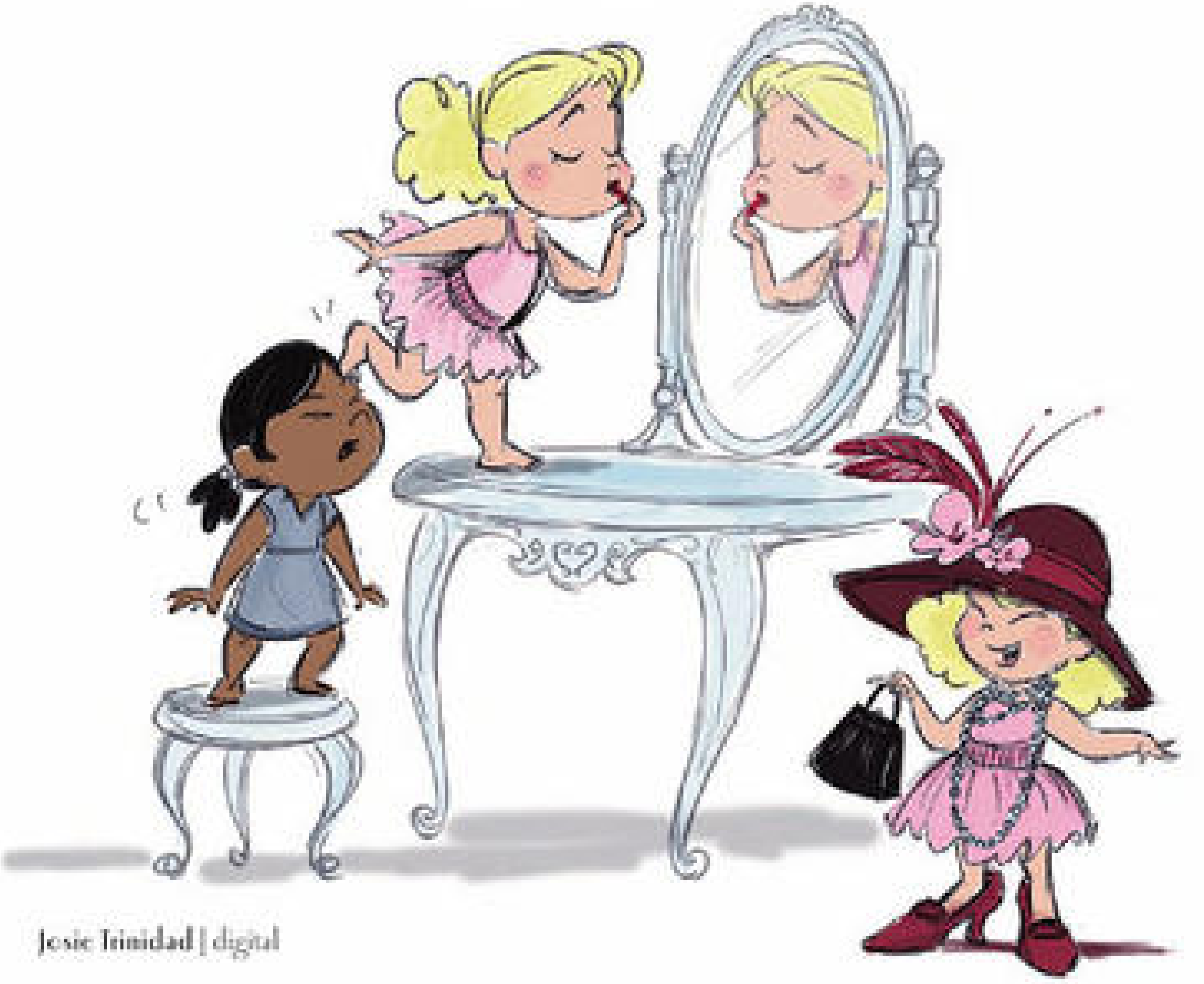
Lorelay Bove | digital



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

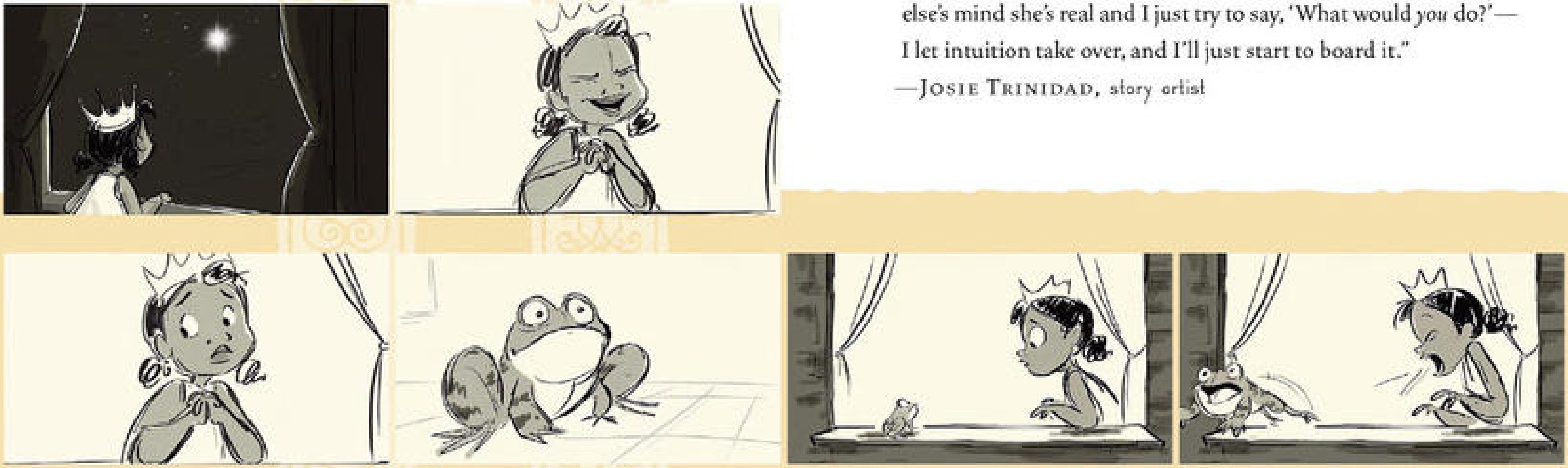


Lisa Keene | digital

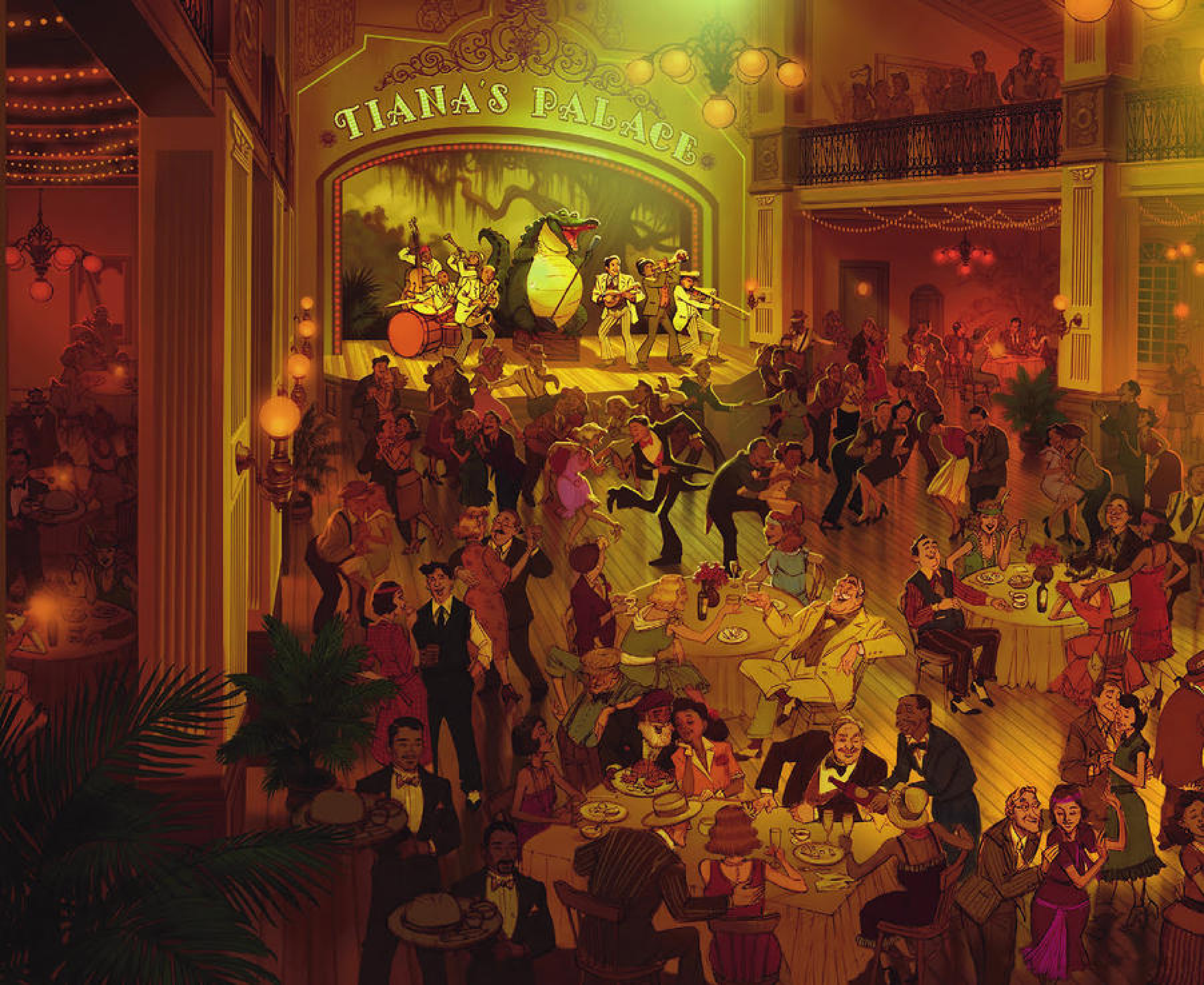


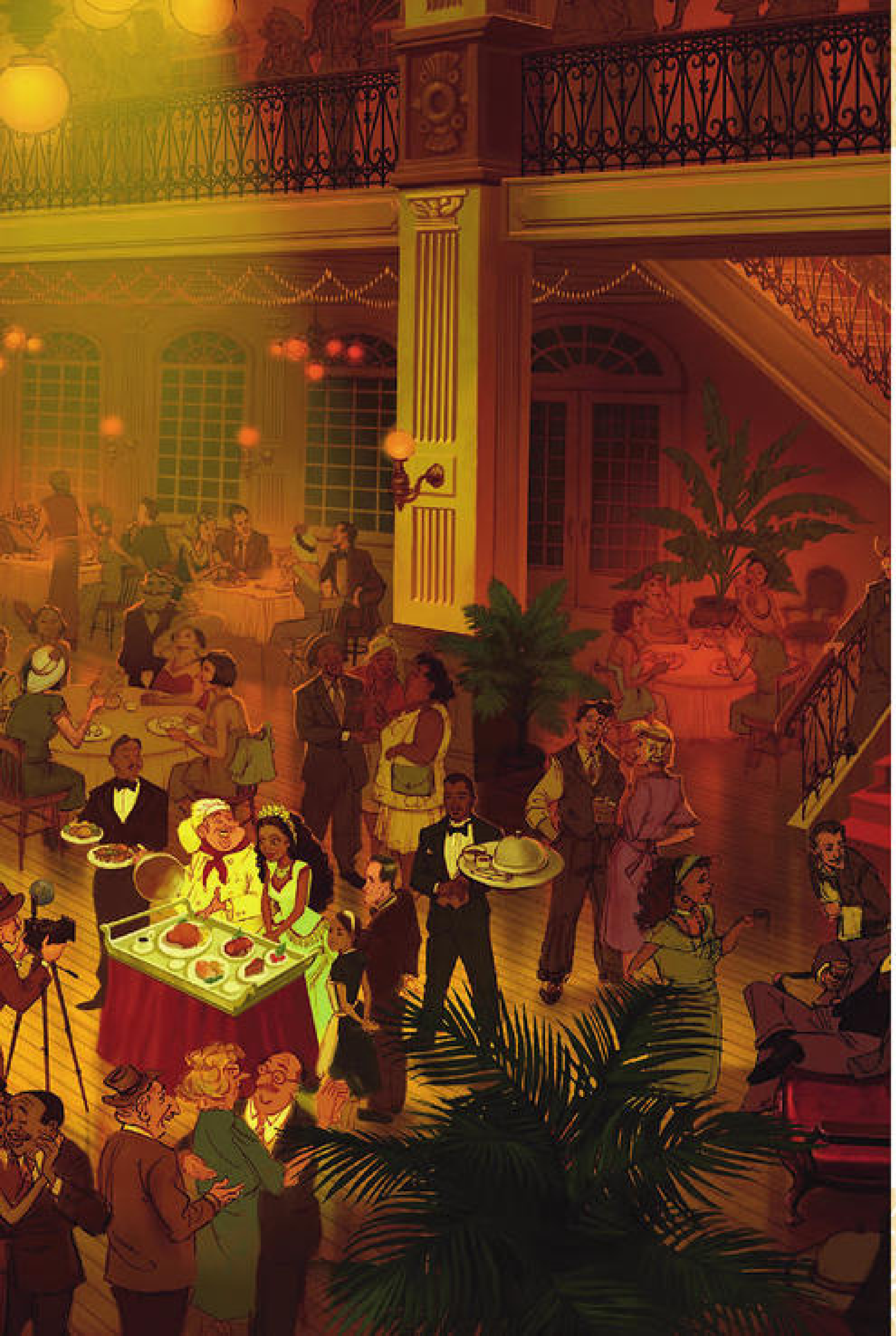
Josie Trinidad | digital

"Sounds weird, but I let the characters speak to me. I know that the character does not exist, and yet in my mind and in everyone else's mind she's real and I just try to say, 'What would *you* do?'—I let intuition take over, and I'll just start to board it."
—JOSIE TRINIDAD, story artist



Storyboards | Josie Trinidad | digital


TIANA'S PALACE

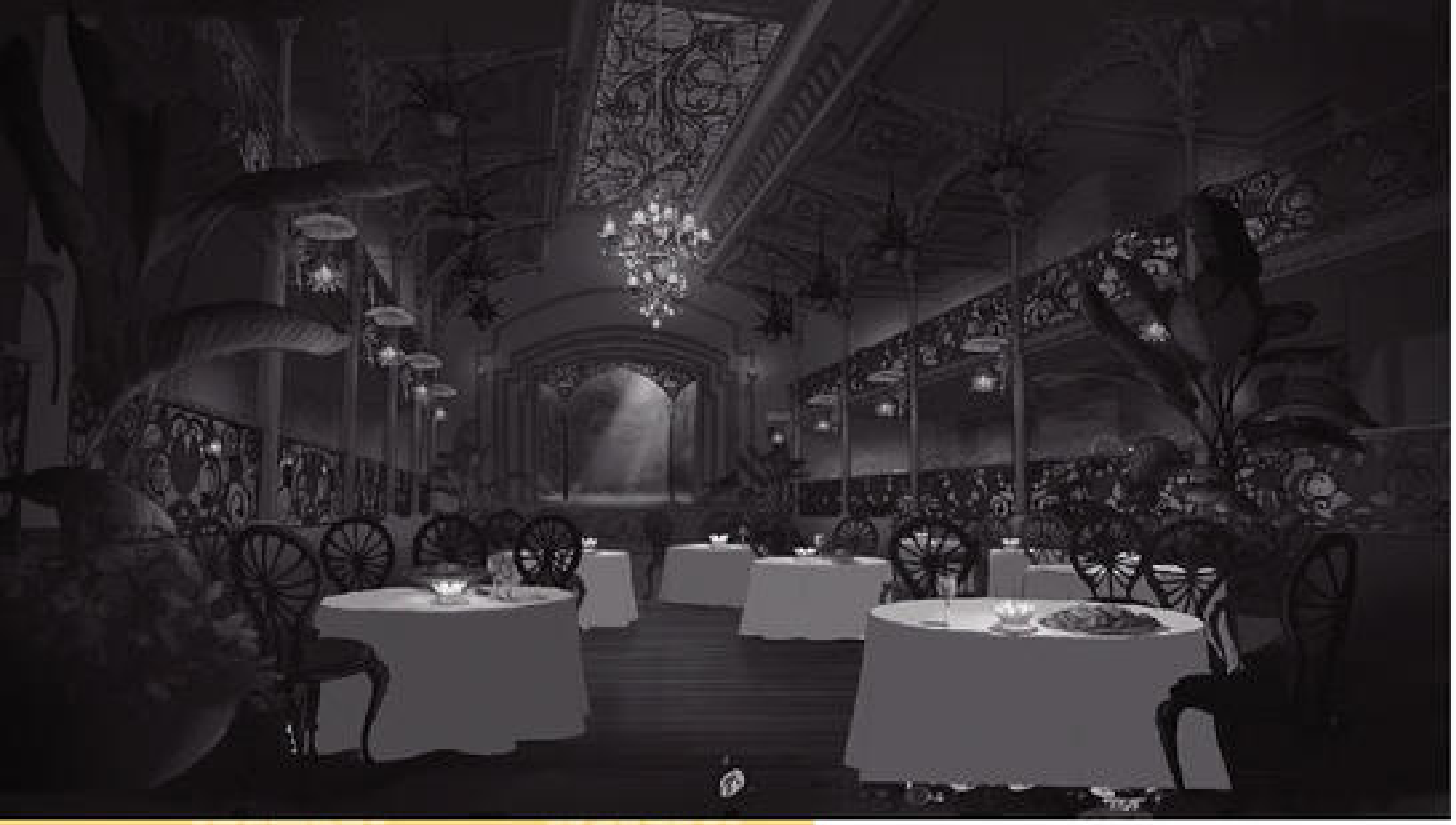


James Aaron Finch | layout, Armand Baltazar | digital

THE RESTAURANT

Tiana's legacy is the dream she shared with her father—to own a successful New Orleans restaurant. She dreams of taking an old sugar mill, past its prime, and transforming it into a new culinary destination, and a tribute to James's memory. James had once given his little girl a magazine illustration of a fine restaurant scene, and added her name to it.

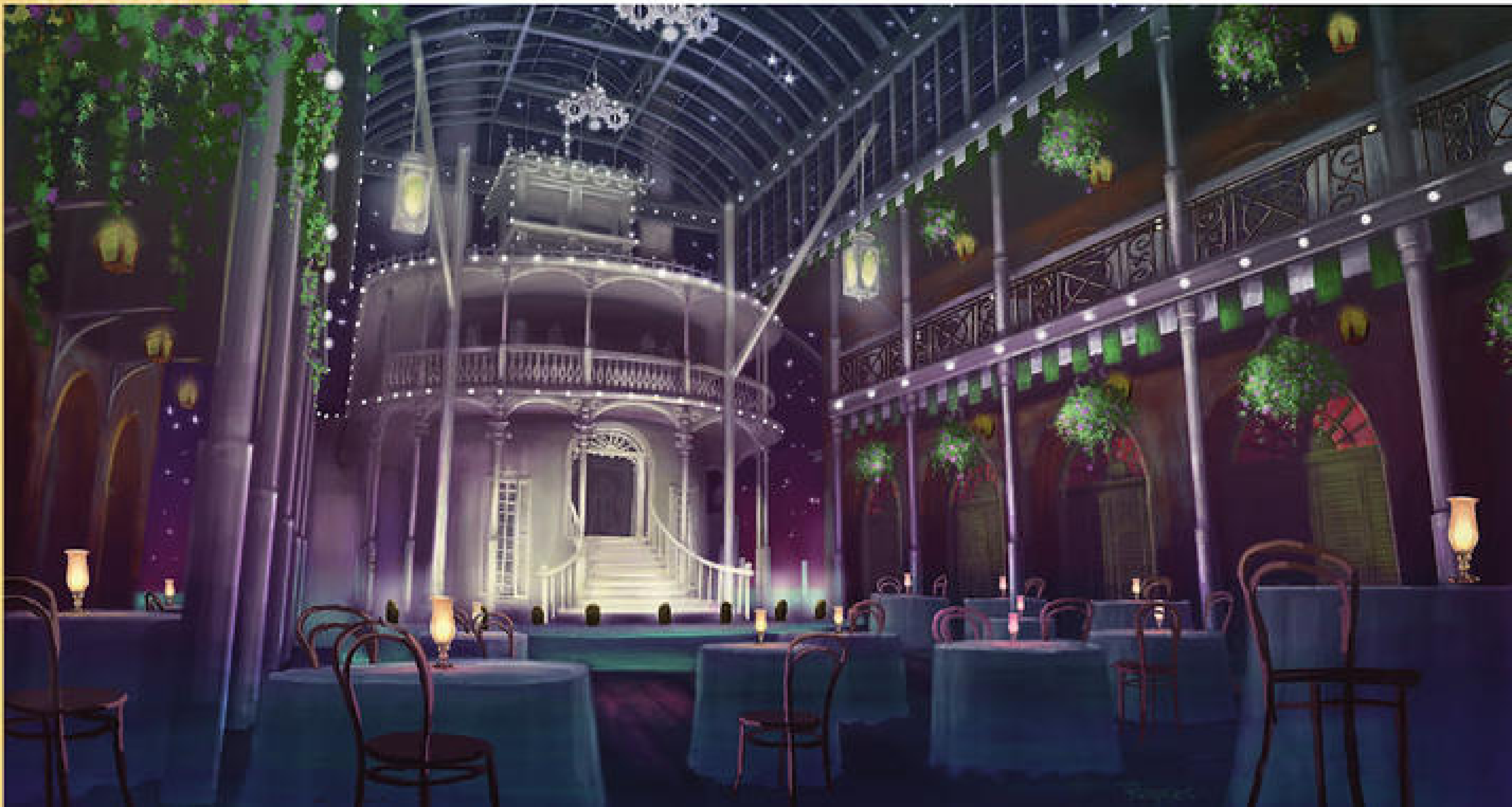
Visual development artist James Aaron Finch tried to balance the needs of the story with a certain amount of plot logic in trying to define the physical space of Tiana's restaurant. "It's a kind of a concept that you toy with in terms of buildings that were probably unrealistically hard to afford at that time for someone like Tiana. So what I'm doing is I'm looking at some of the references we have, but I'm also looking at shape language. There are props that you put in there so people can understand that it represents a warehouse, an abandoned industrial space that she's found. I think the challenge in that is to try and find the right visual language that will be identifiable for the audiences to see a transformation that is realistic. So that warehouse, whatever it had in there, could be utilized and shifted around, and reconfigured so that her building is unique, and New Orleans-y."



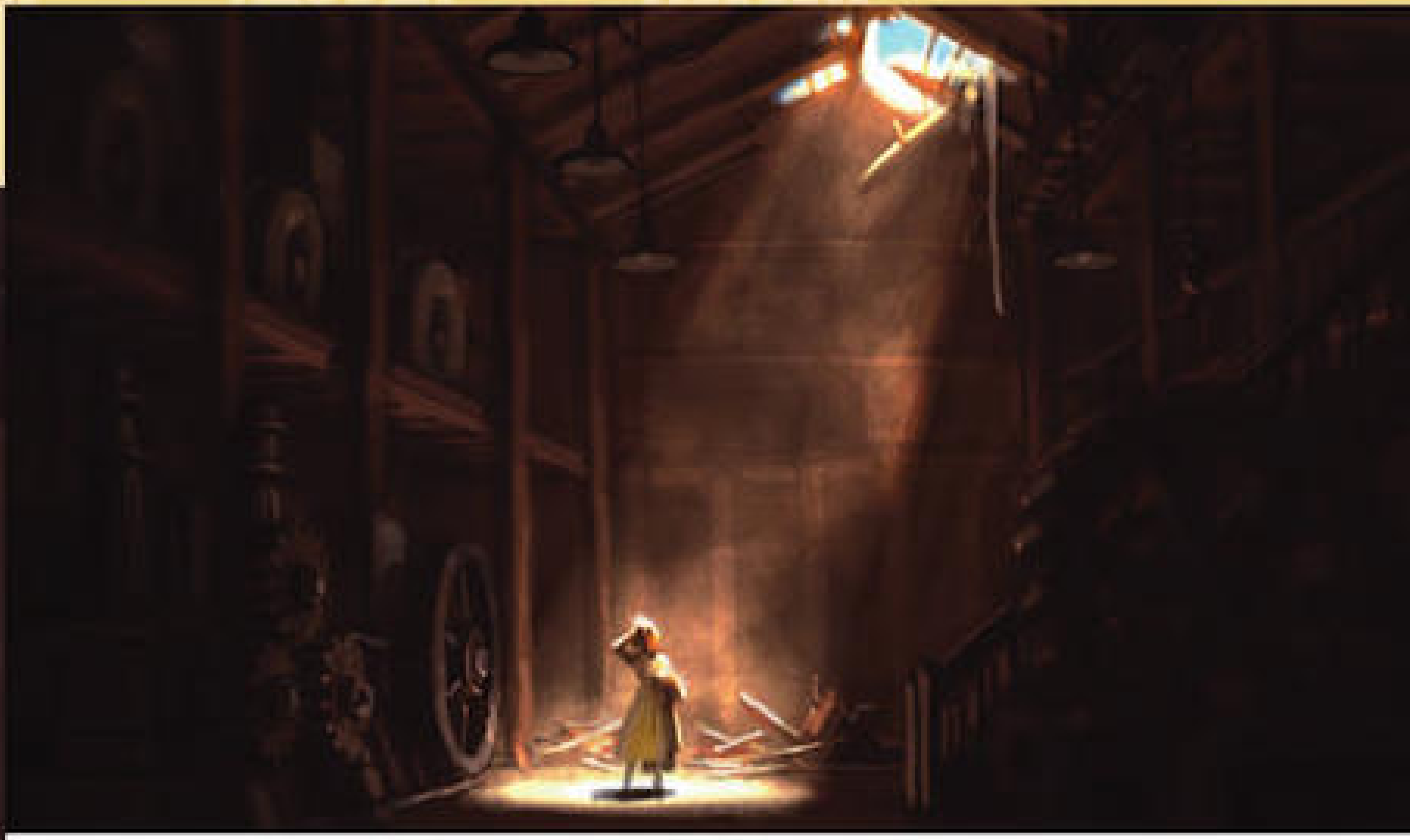
Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani | digital, Drawing | James Alles | graphite

"Our writer Rob Edwards was also an invaluable addition to our story team. He's very funny and will just keep working a scene until it's right. However, his most important contribution, in my opinion, was his development of Tiana's father, James, and the idea of tying her dream of owning a restaurant to his. Rob brought the idea of food bringing people together from all walks of life to the story, and it became the emotional spine of the movie. That idea gave this story great depth and emotional weight."

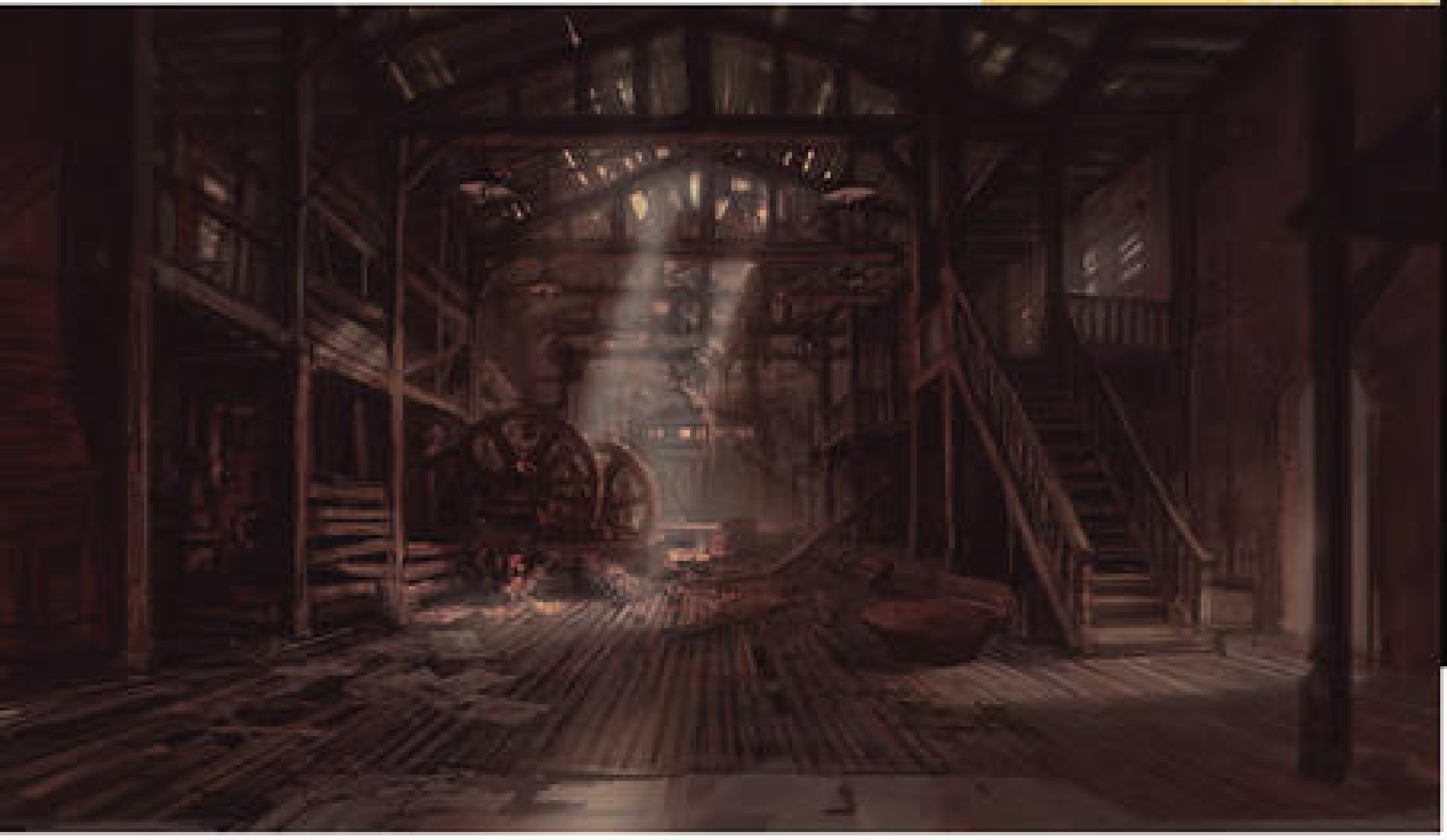
—DON HALL, head of story



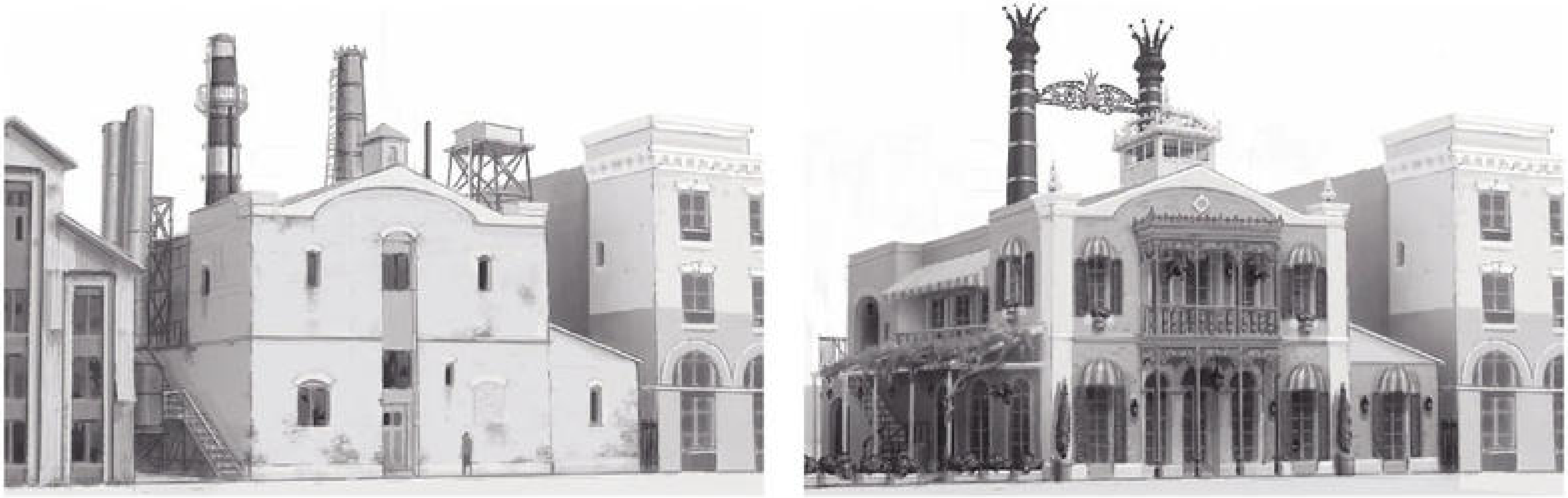
Doug Rogers | digital



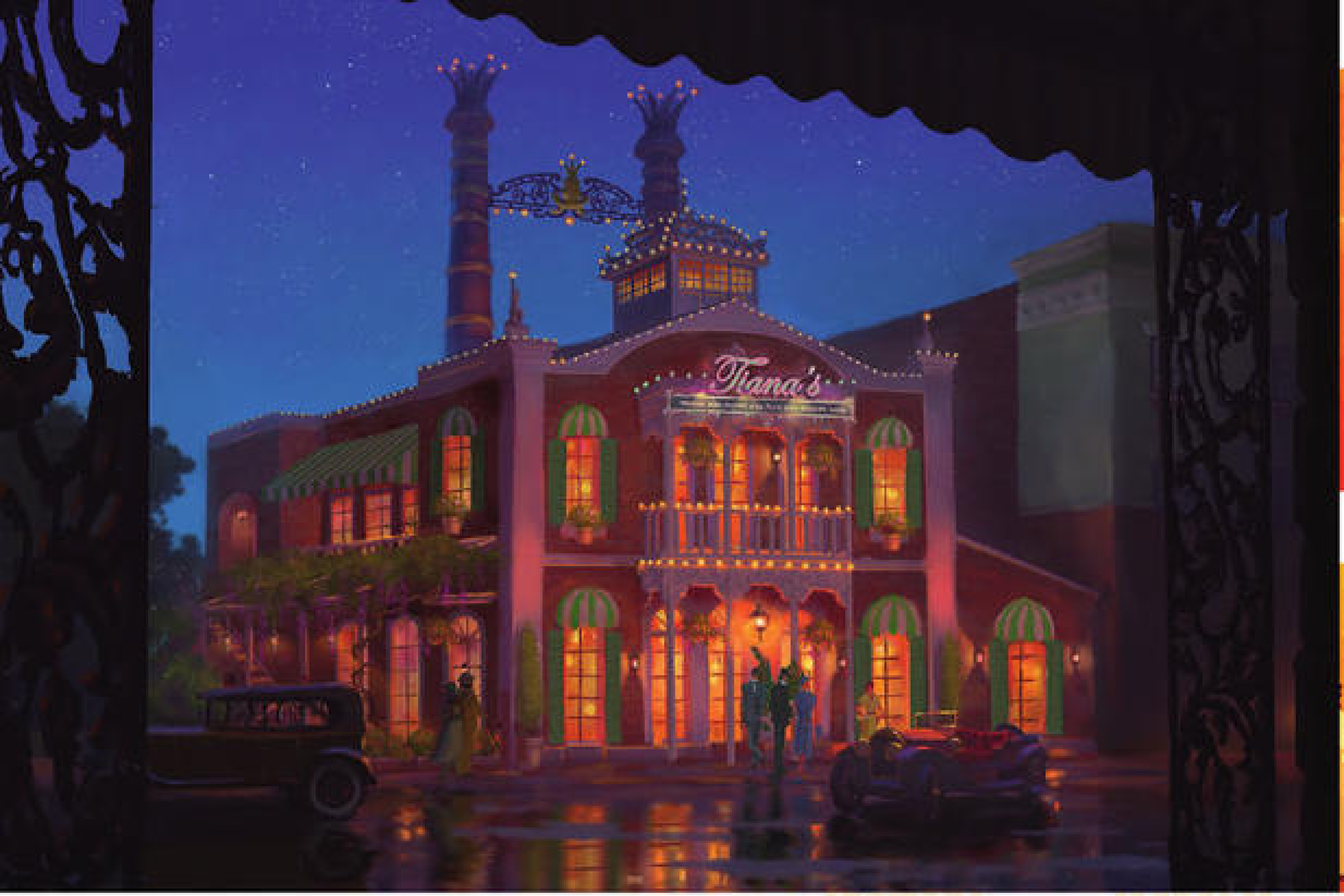
Ian Gooding | digital



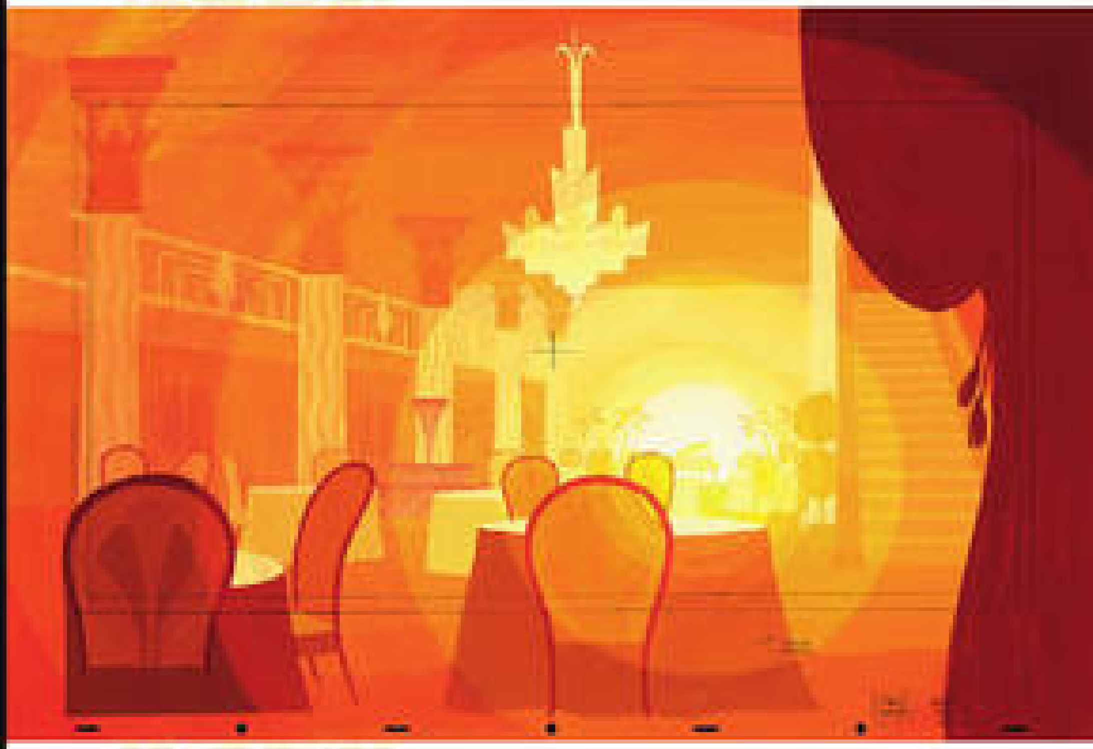
James Aaron Finch | digital



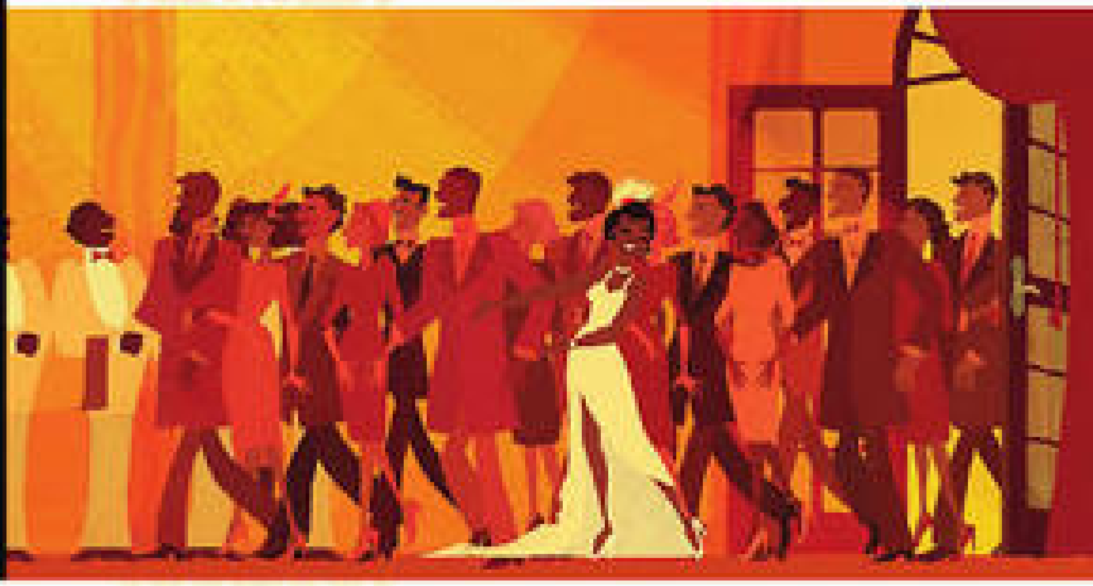
Tiana's Restaurant (before/after) | **James Alles** | graphite, **Ian Gooding** | digital



Kelly McGraw | digital

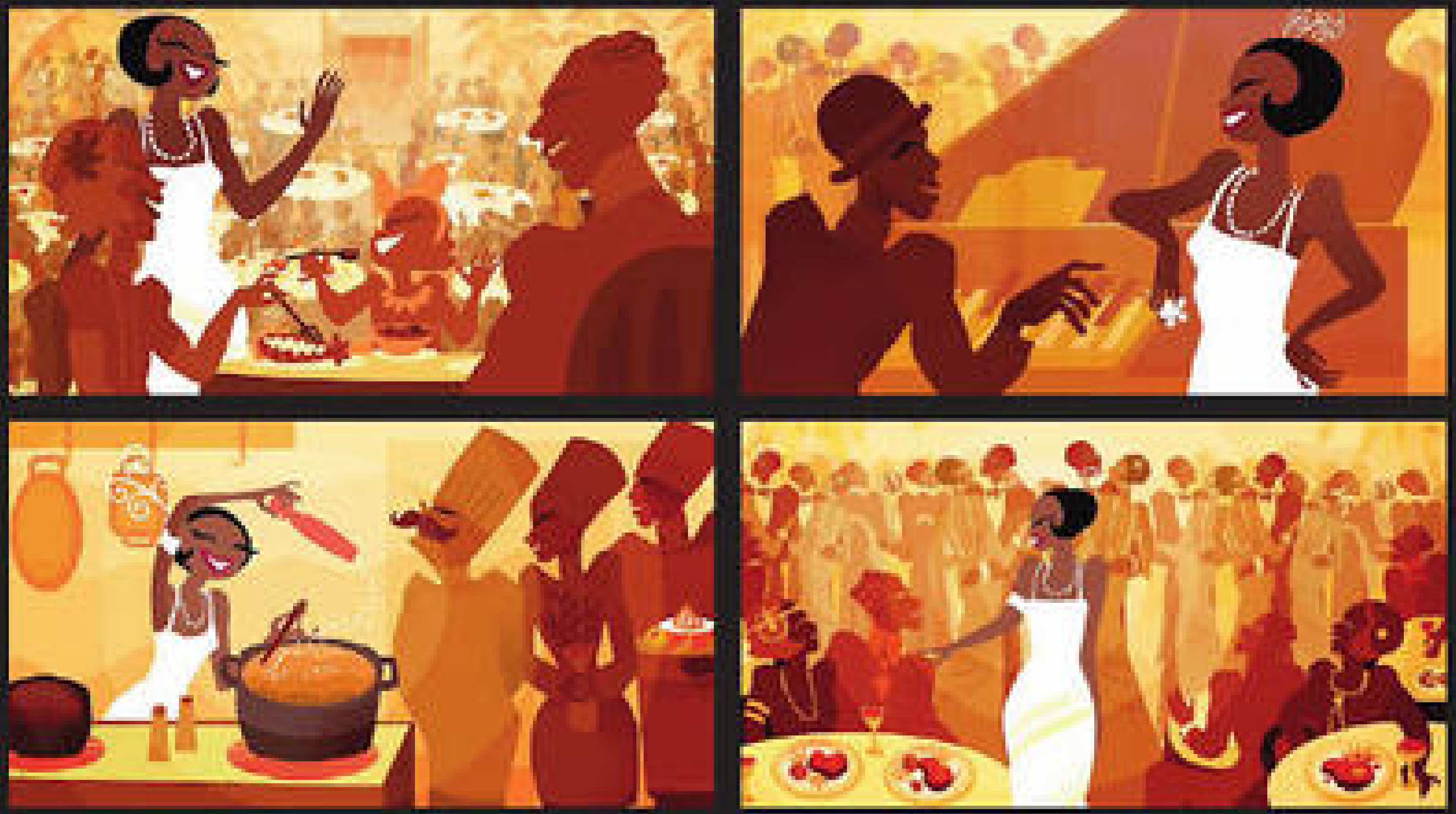


Lorelay Bove | digital

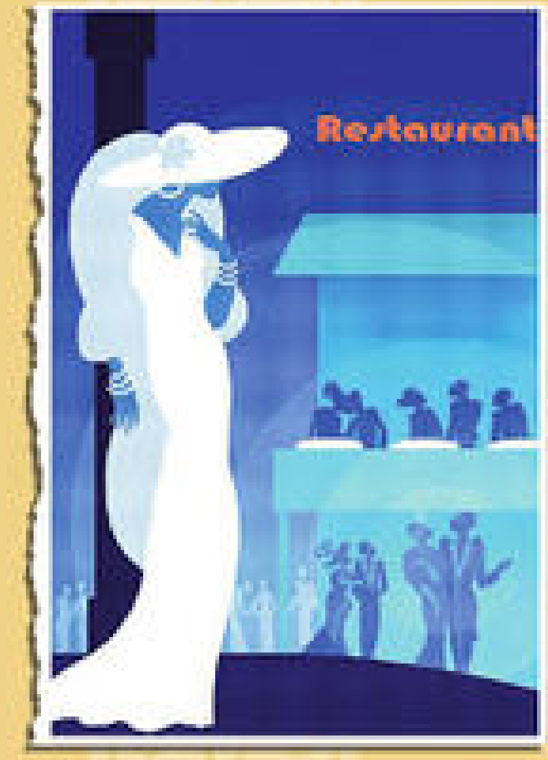


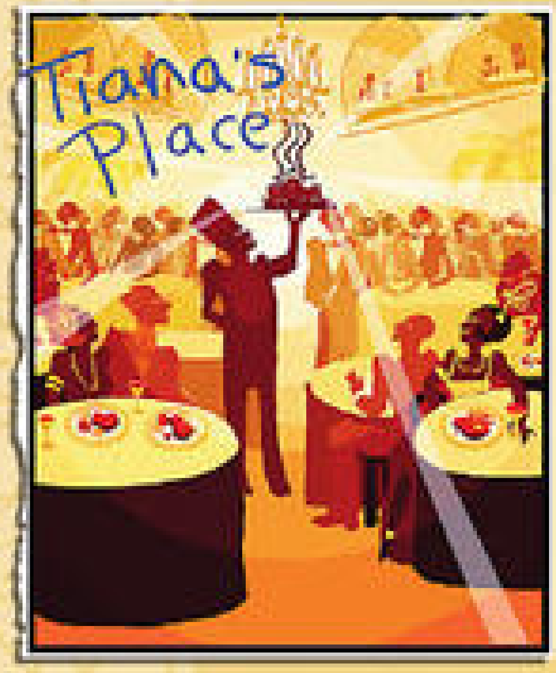
Lorelay Bove | digital

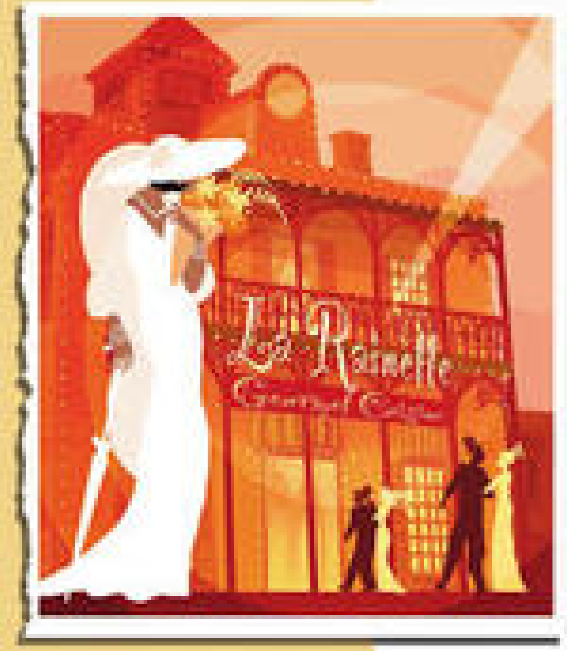
"When designing, I try to create a look that's new and different yet still feels as if it would have existed back in the day. I researched for inspiration the popular styles of the early 1900s. Styles such as art deco and its rhythmic artists like Erté, the organic art nouveau with poster designers like Alphonse Mucha , and the ethnic American art from Harlem renaissance artists such as Aaron Douglas helped me to imagine a new design that feels classic."
—Sue Nichols, visual development artist

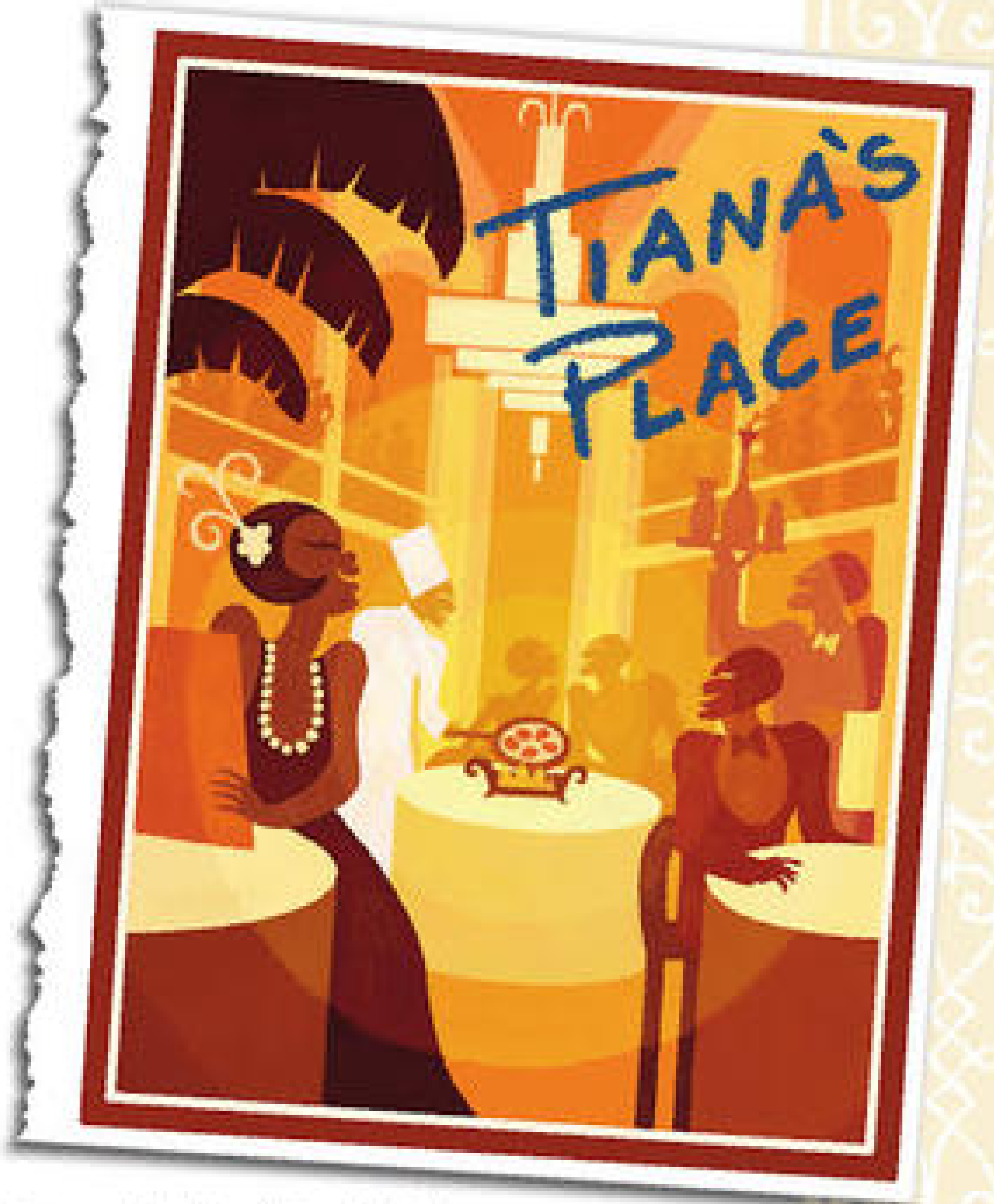


Sue Nichols | digital

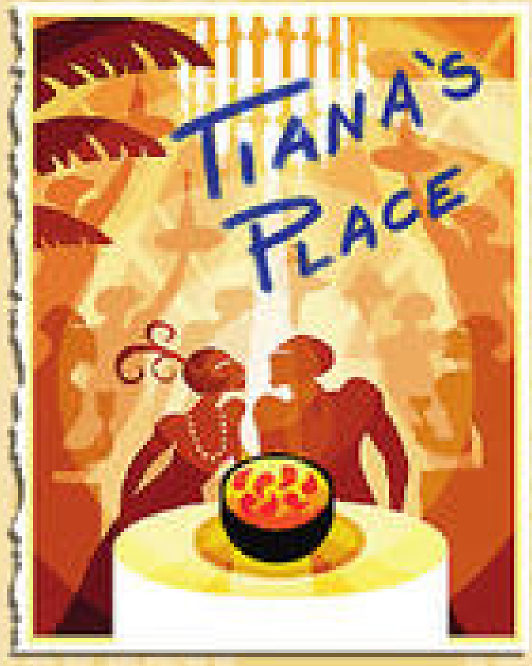

Restaurant

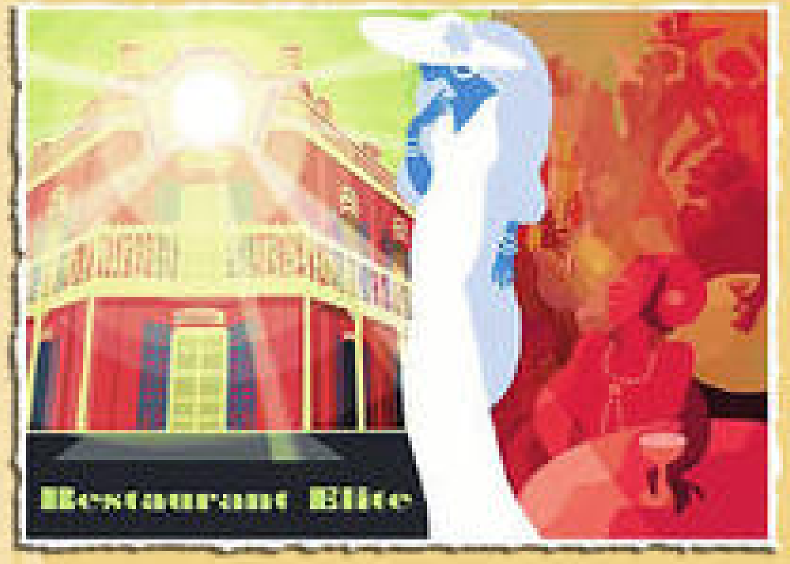

Tiana's Place

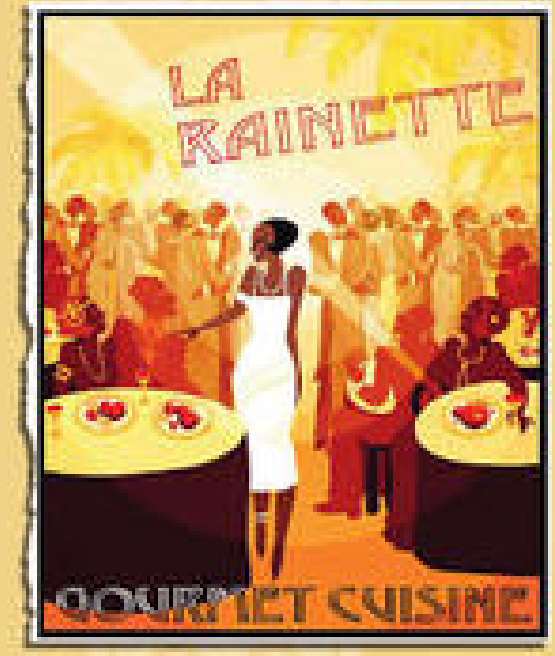

La Rainette
Gourmet Cuisine

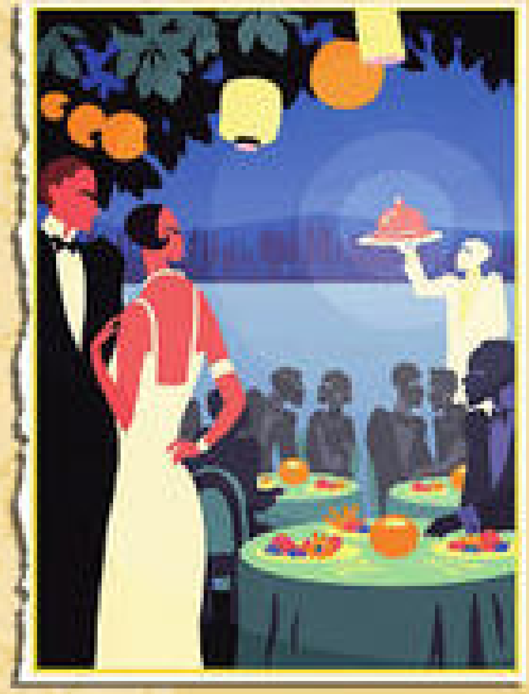

TIANA'S PLACE

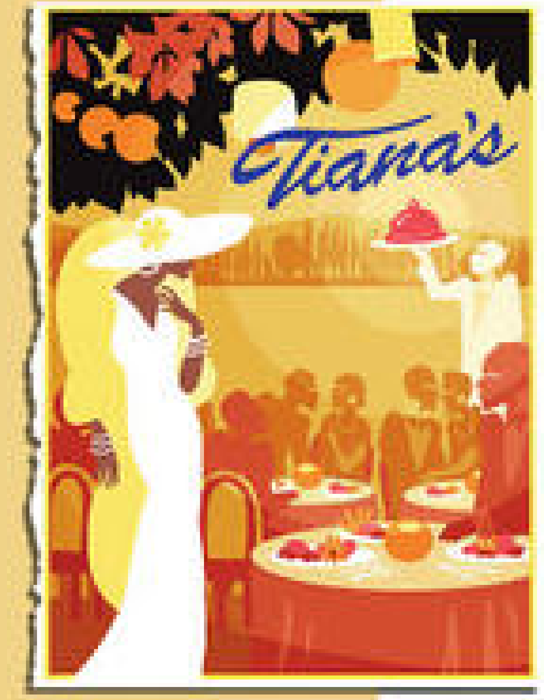
Tiana's Restaurant flyer | Lorelay Bove | digital


TIANA'S PLACE


Restaurant Elite

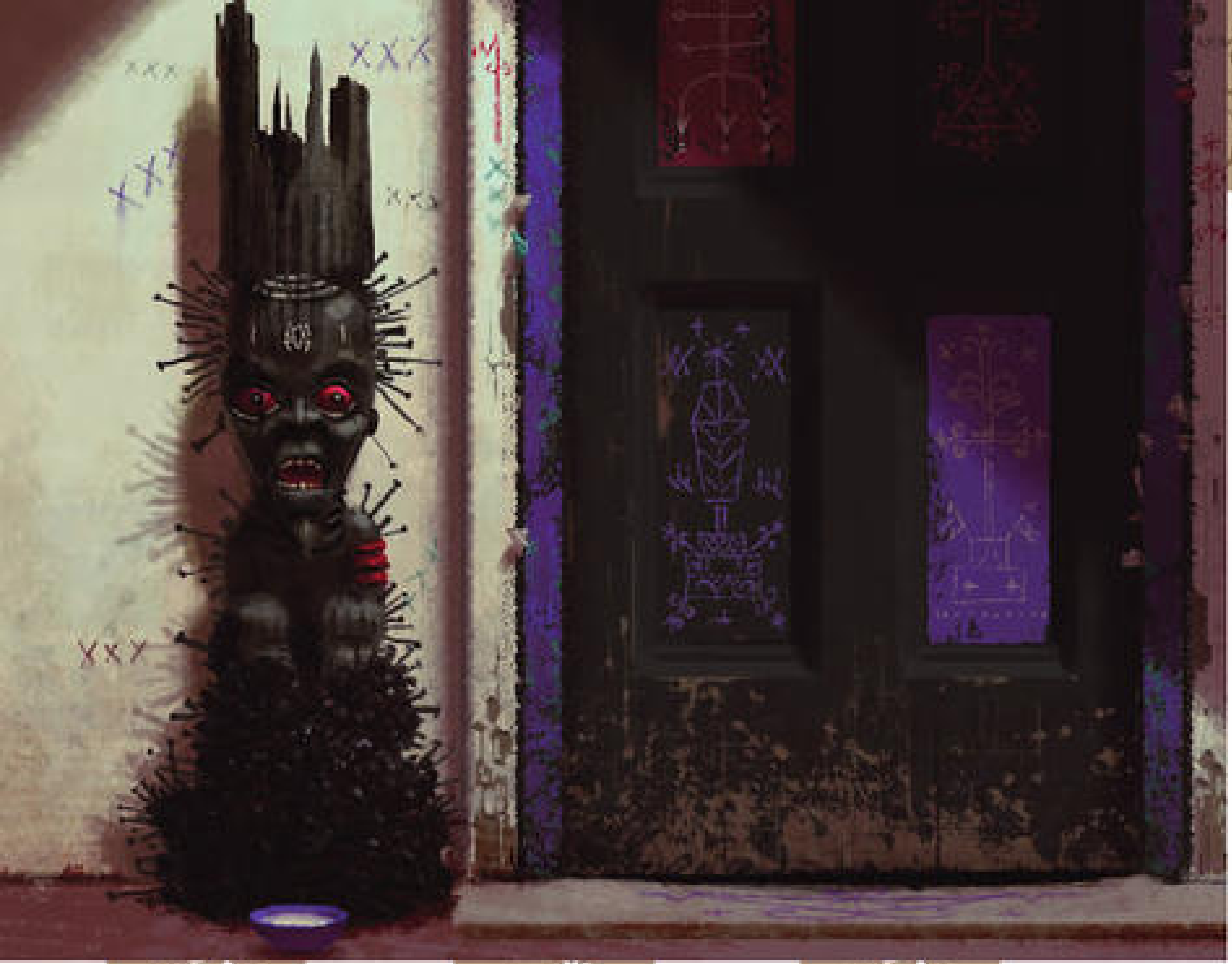

LA RAINETTE
GOURMET CUISINE





Tiana's Restaurant flyers | Sue Nichols | digital

"The idea of James giving the illustration to Tiana was something that John Lasseter added. We had that piece of paper before, in earlier versions, where Tiana herself clipped this ad as inspiration, but we never showed where it came from. John thought that maybe we should have James actually write Tiana's name on it, and give it to her when she's a little girl and say, 'This is my dream and it can be our dream,' so it's a symbol throughout the rest of the movie of her dad's dream and love."
—RUBEN AQUINO, supervising animator

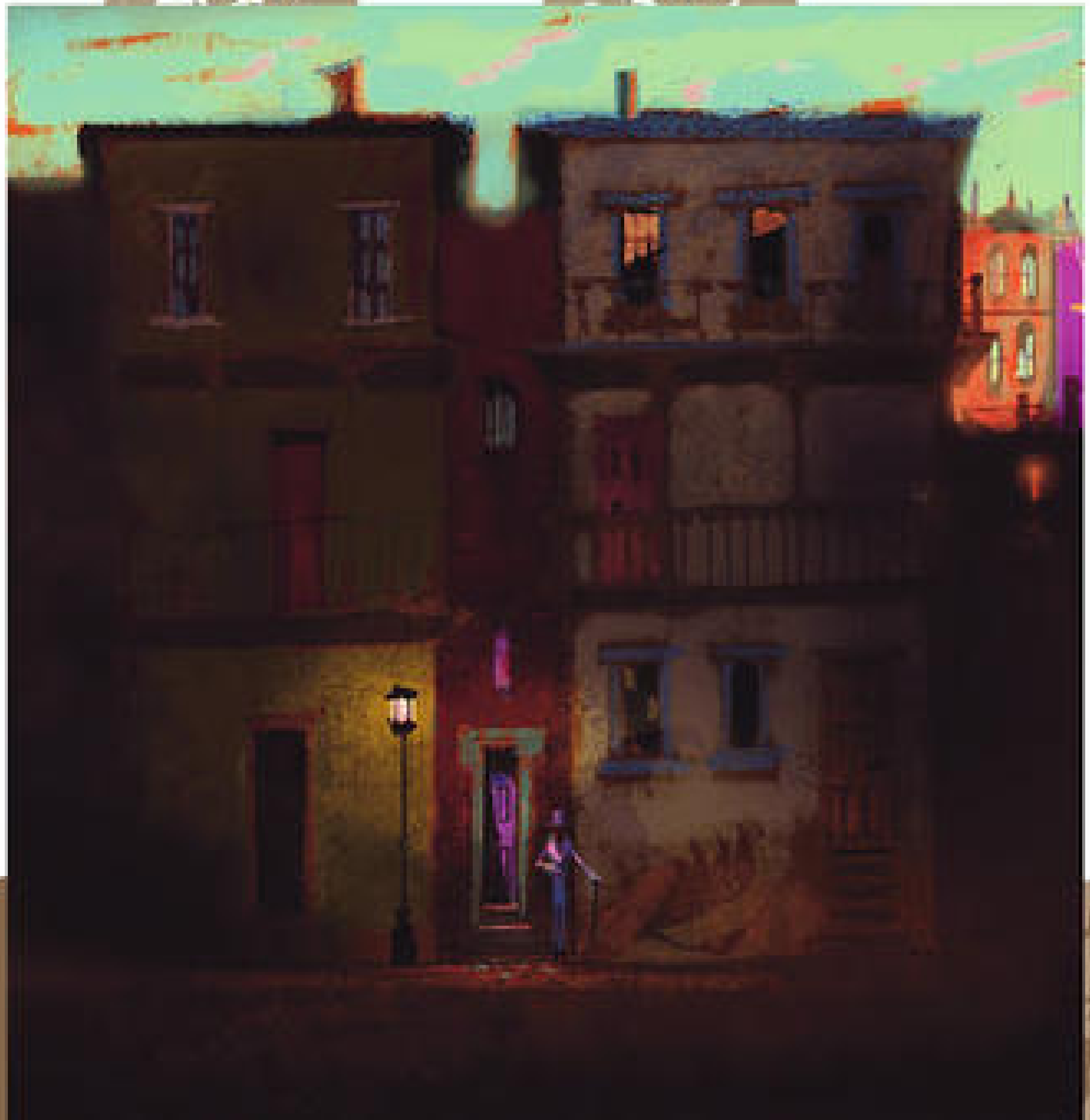


Ian Gooding | digital

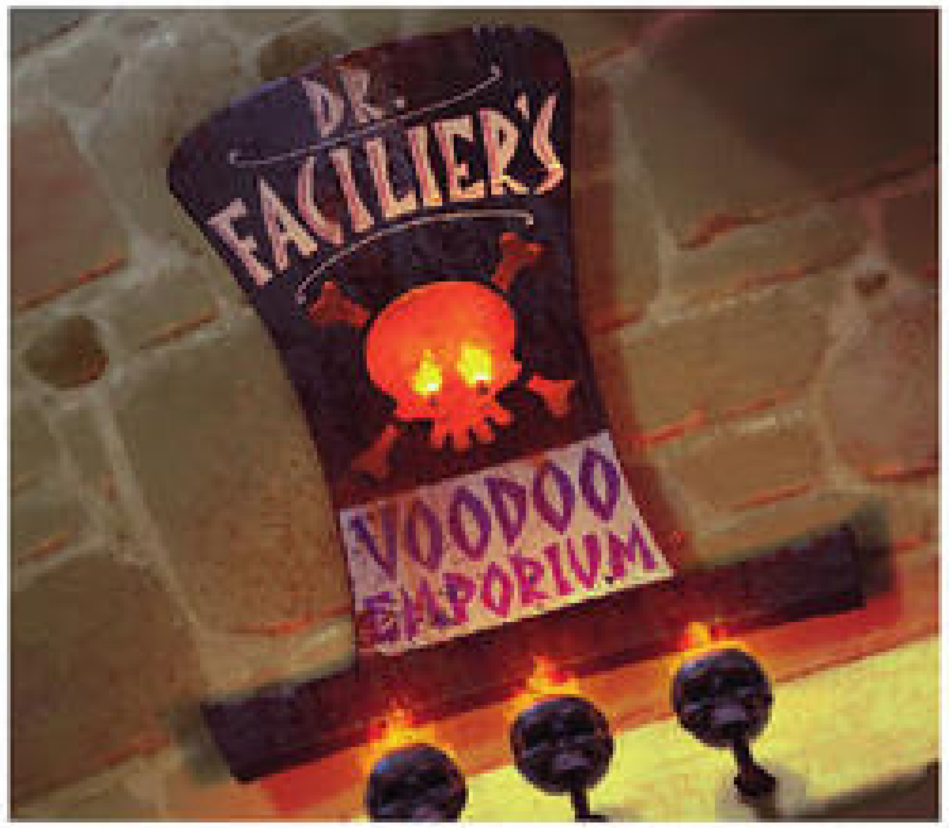
THE DARK SIDE OF NEW ORLEANS

Another part of the appeal of New Orleans as a setting, and one that helped define the key element of enchantment in the story, is an undercurrent of wickedness and black magic, the presence of sin in the shadows of virtue, of darkness lurking behind the graceful, sunny wrought-iron balconies. While sinister, this element is not unattractive—especially to the youthful and spirited prince. The balances of a life well lived are a part of the appeal of this city to Naveen, the idea that without indulgence one cannot truly enjoy morality.

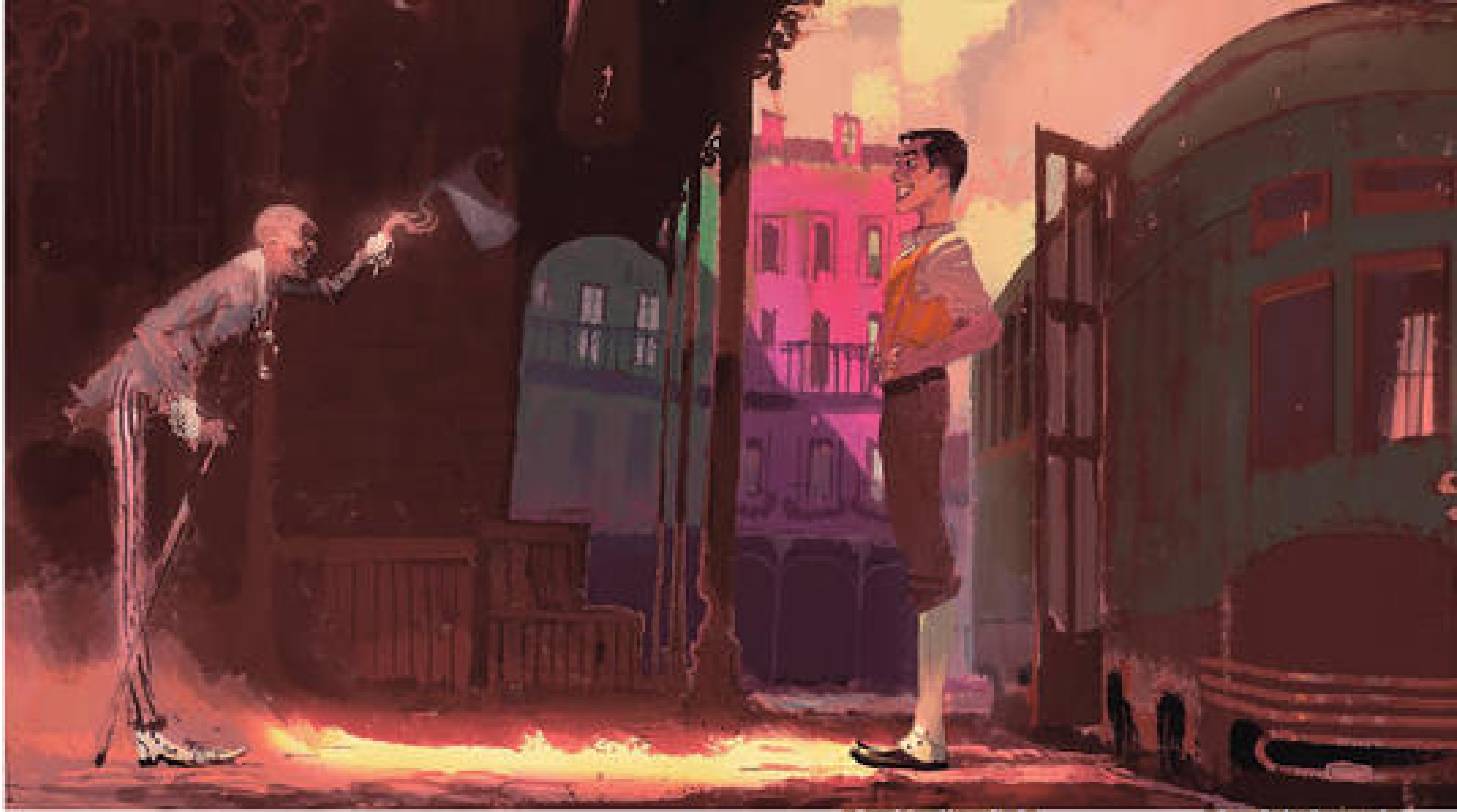
In designing these more ominous settings of the city, the artists developed a visual vocabulary that would reinforce both the mood of the spaces and the characters that inhabit them. Tall, vertical, narrow spaces and doorways, strong contrast, and unsettling light-and-shadow patterns add disquiet to tables containing candles, bottles, statues, and scrolls. In all, elements of fantasy and terror are more pronounced and stylized as an environment for a smooth-talking operator looking for a big catch.



Chris Appelhans | digital

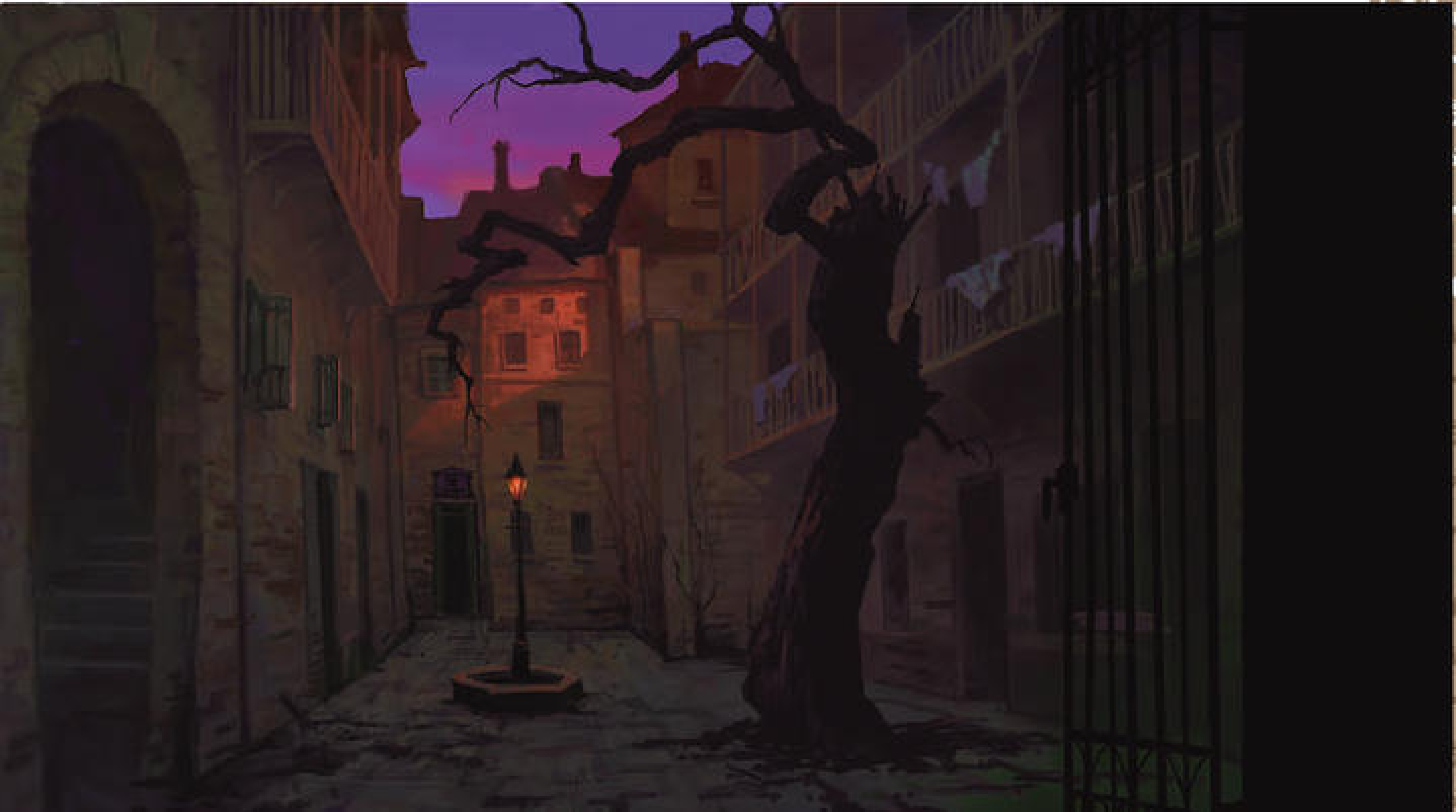

DR. FACILIER'S
VOODOO
EMPORIUM

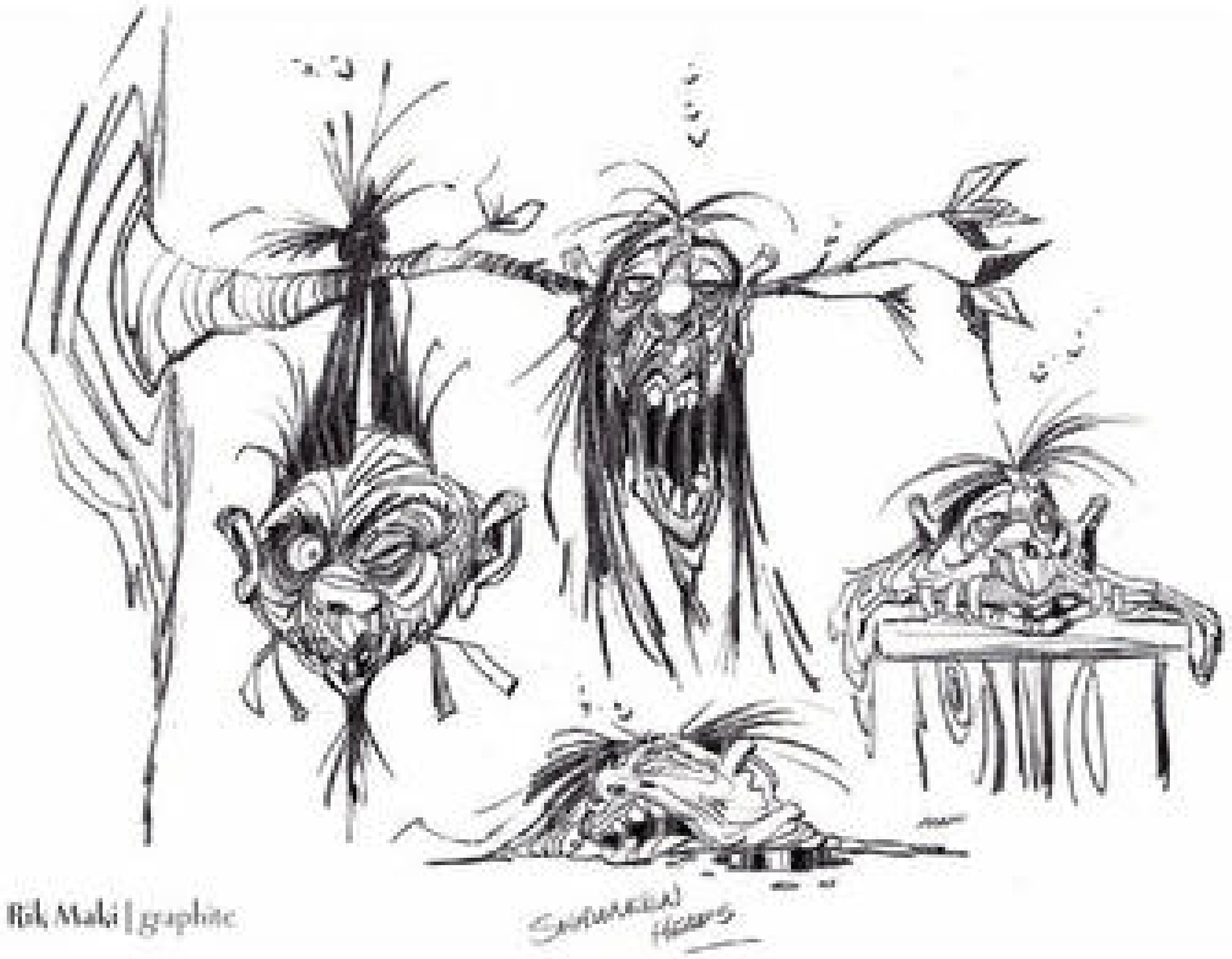
Ian Gooding | digital



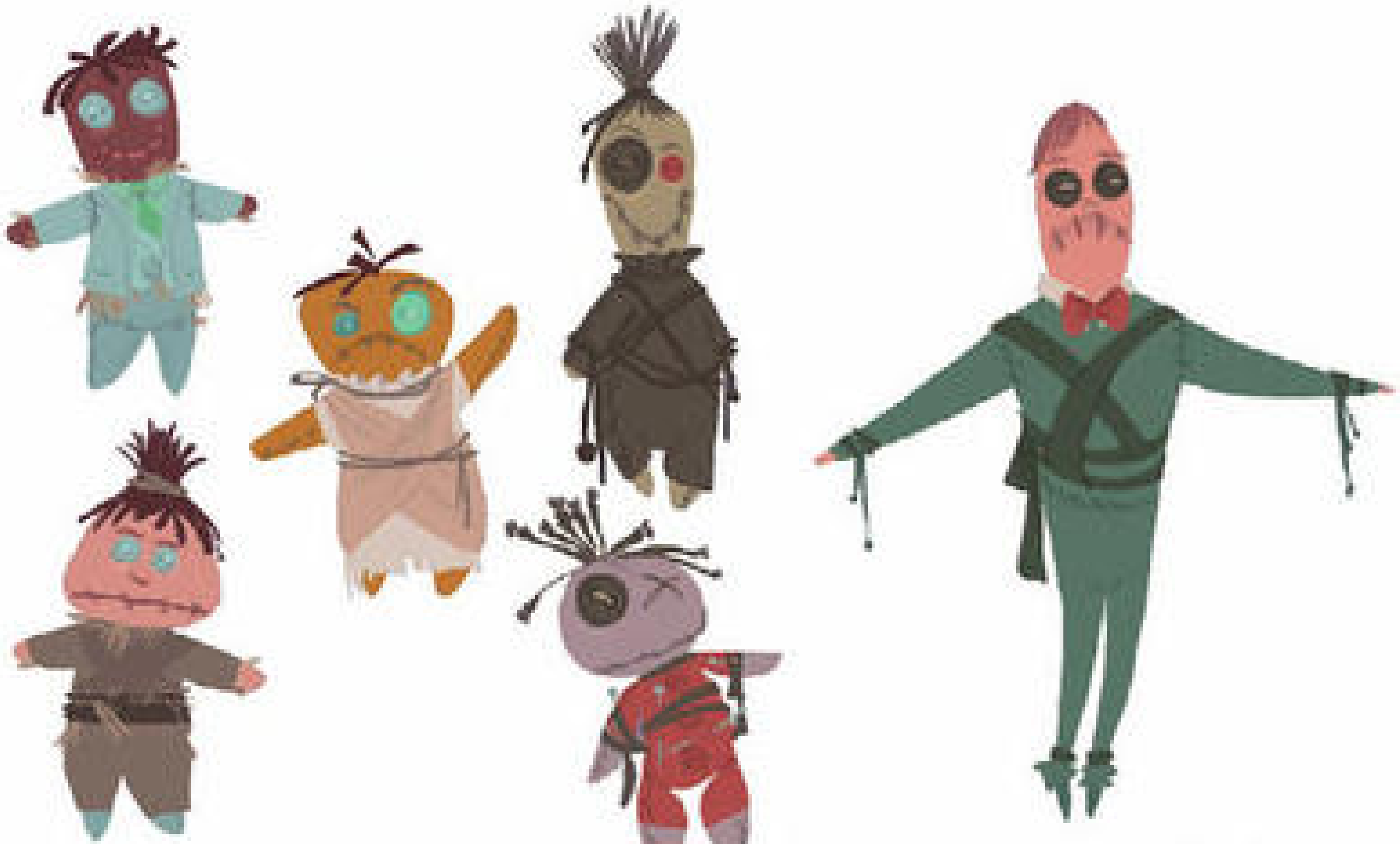
Chris Appelhans | digital

Sunny Apinchapong | digital



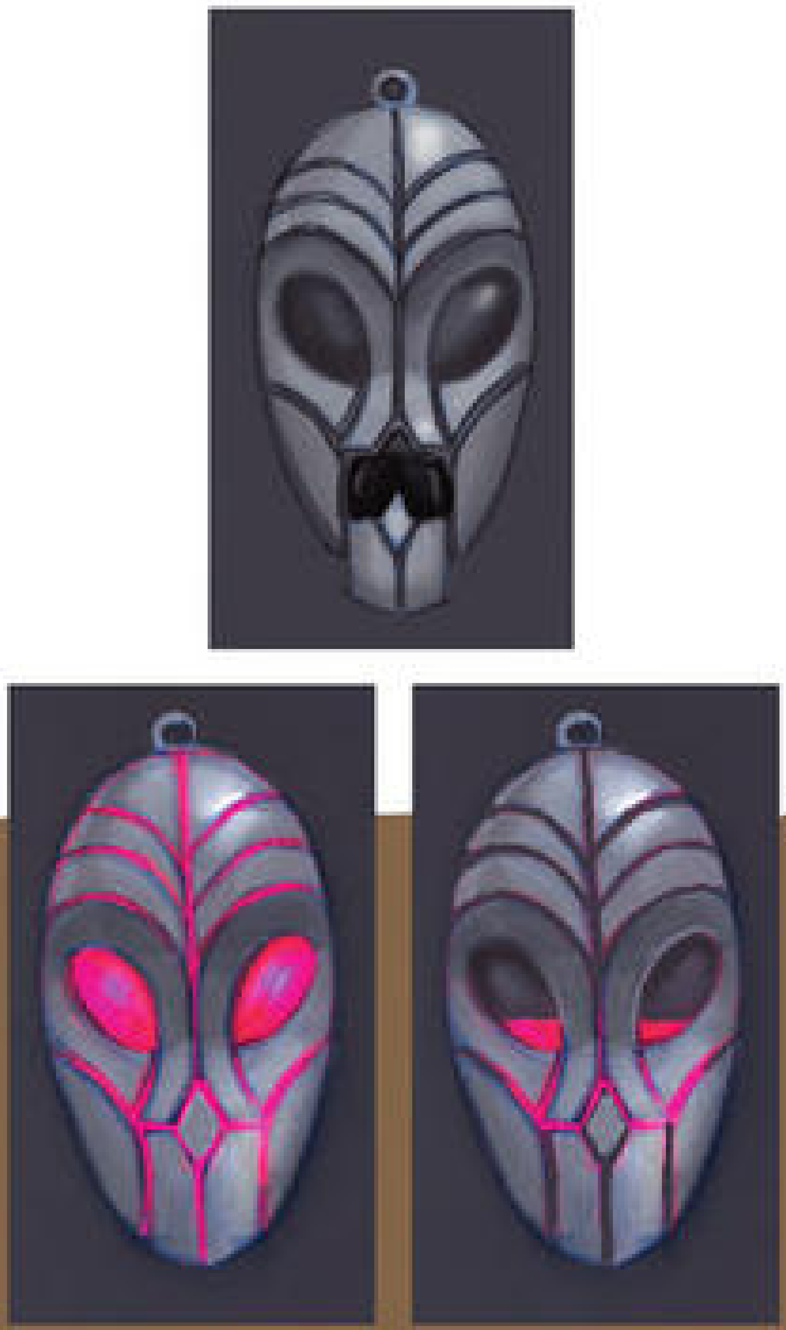

SHRUNKEN HEADS

Rik Maki | graphite

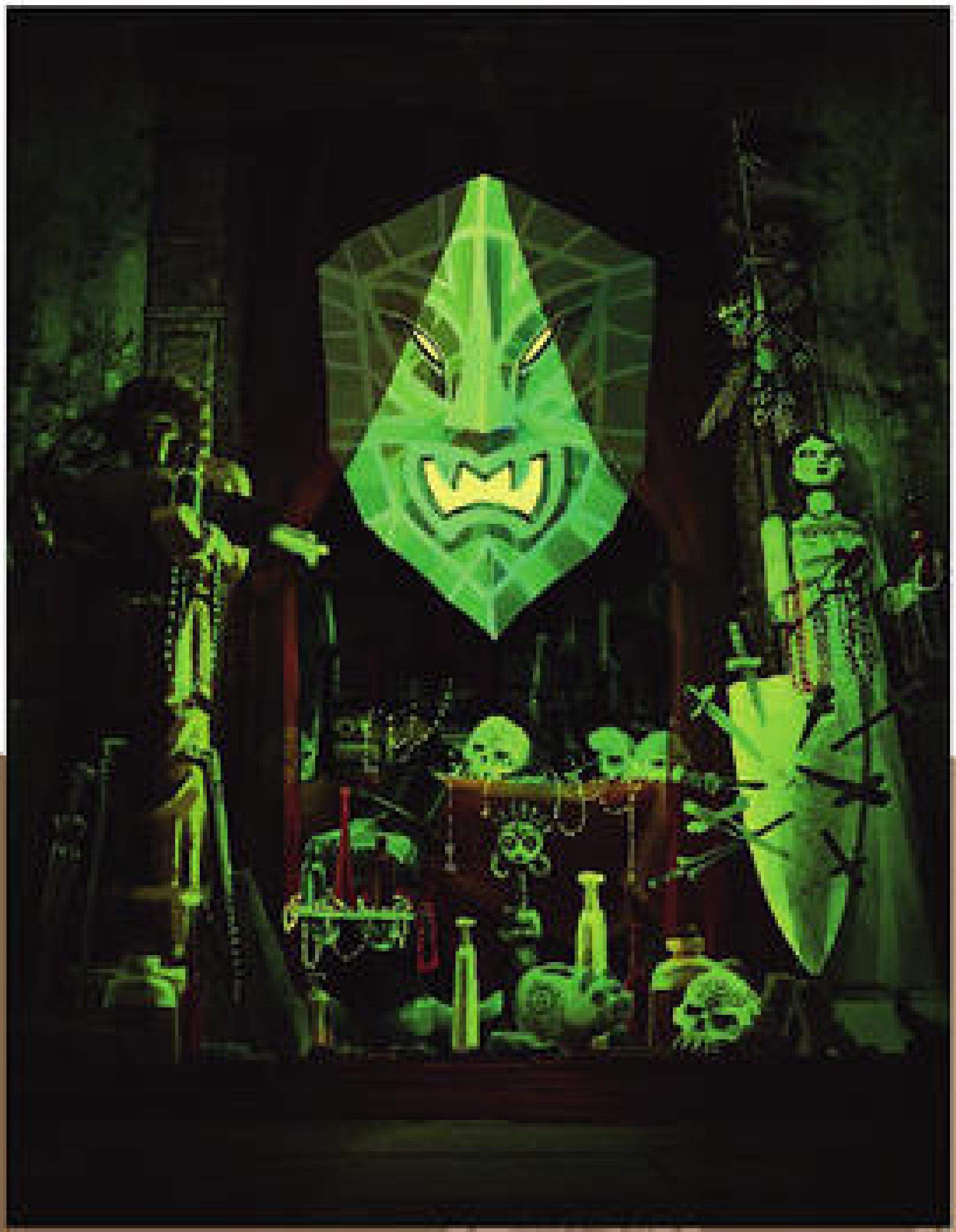


Lorelay Bove | digital

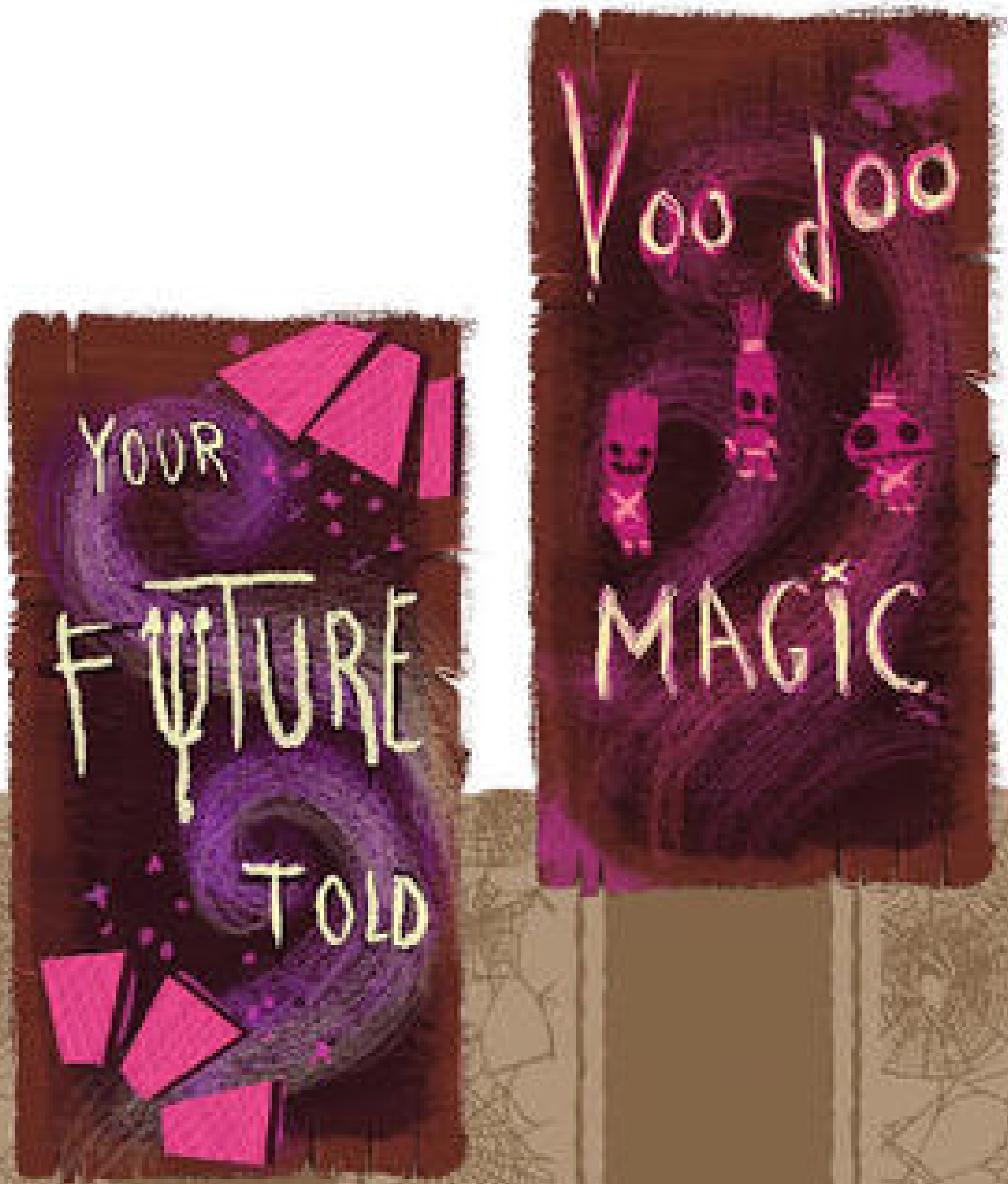
James Aaron Finch | digital

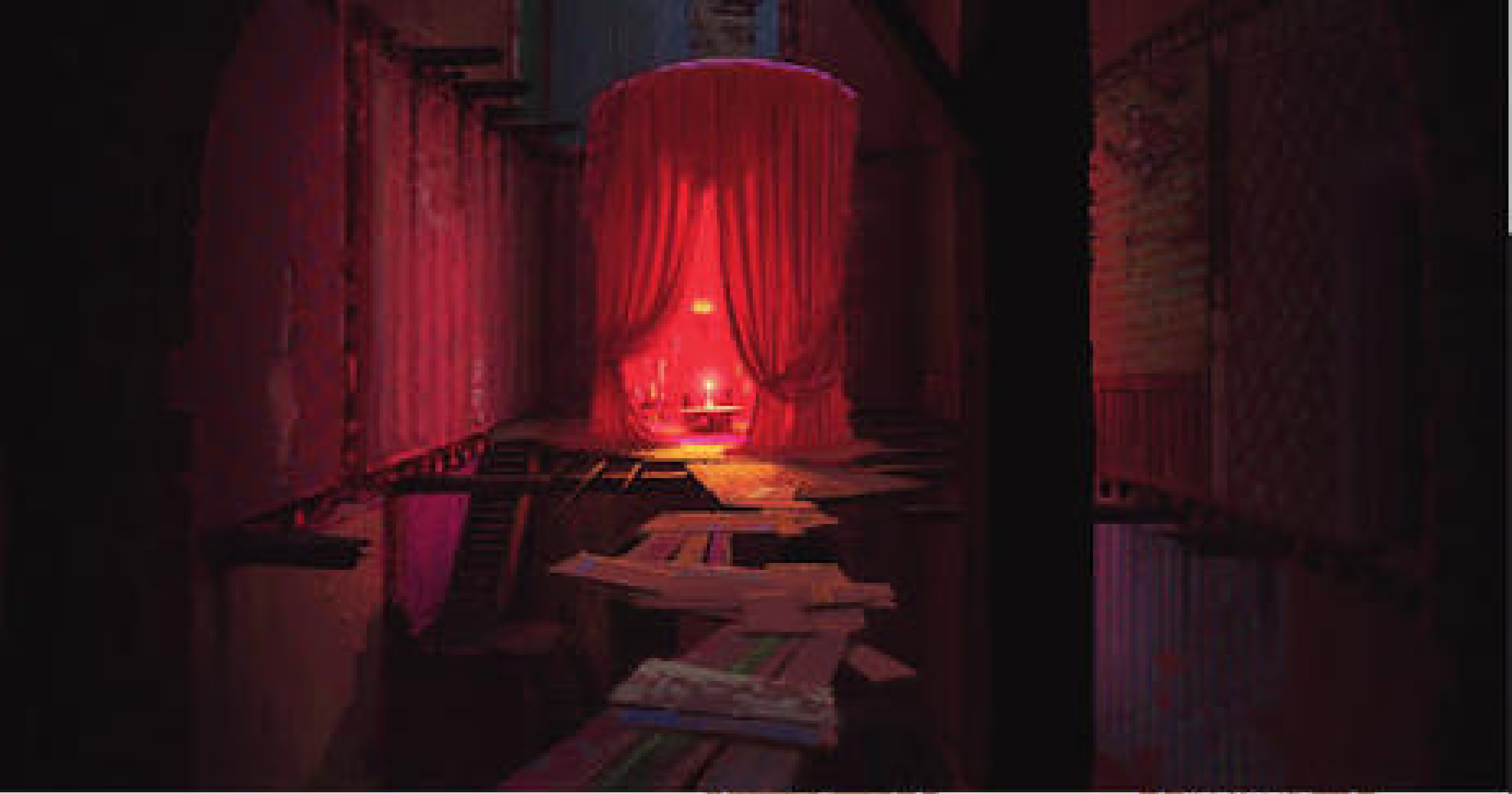


Sue Nichols | digital



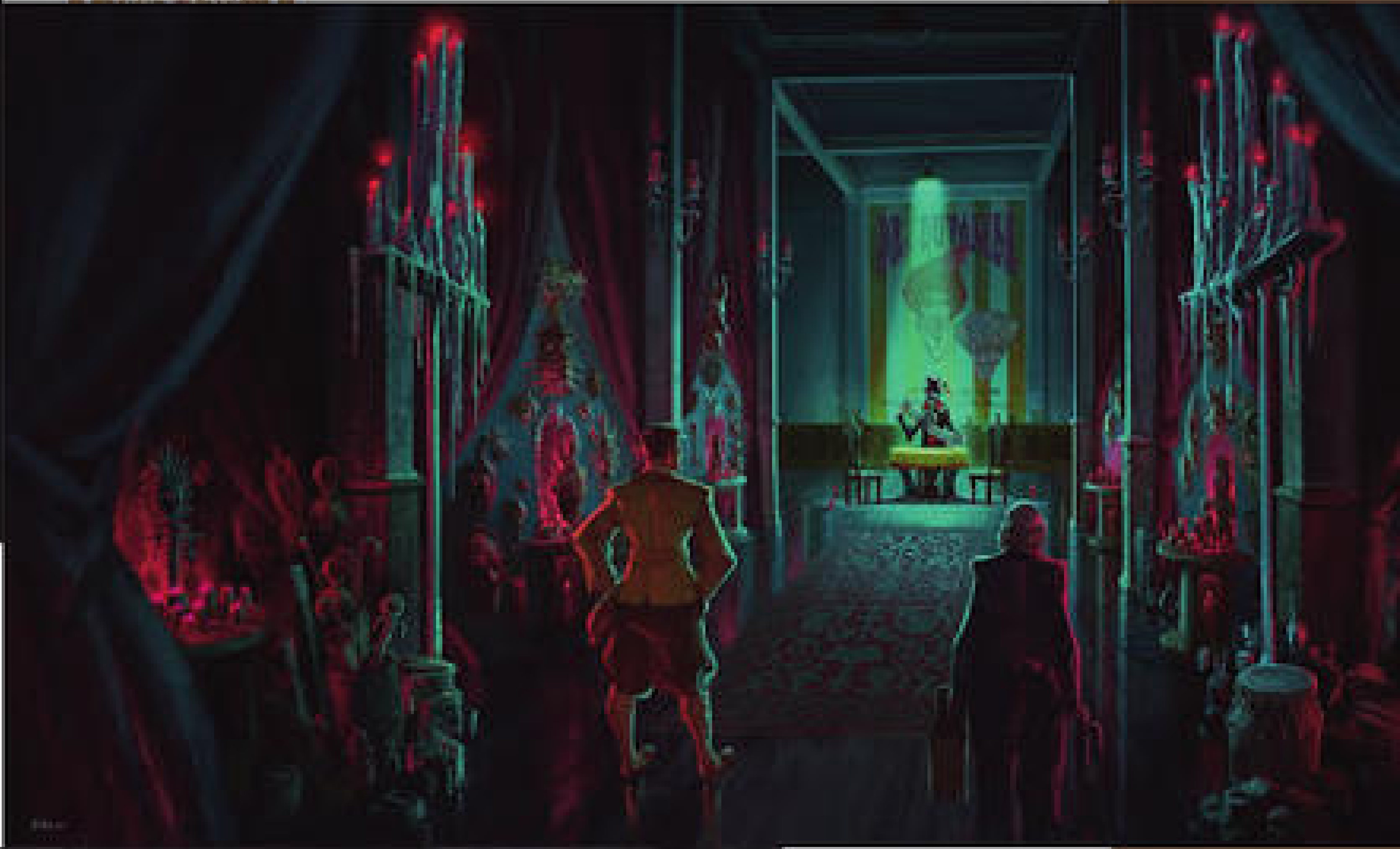
Lorelay Bove | digital


YOUR
FUTURE
TOLD
Voo doo
MAGIC

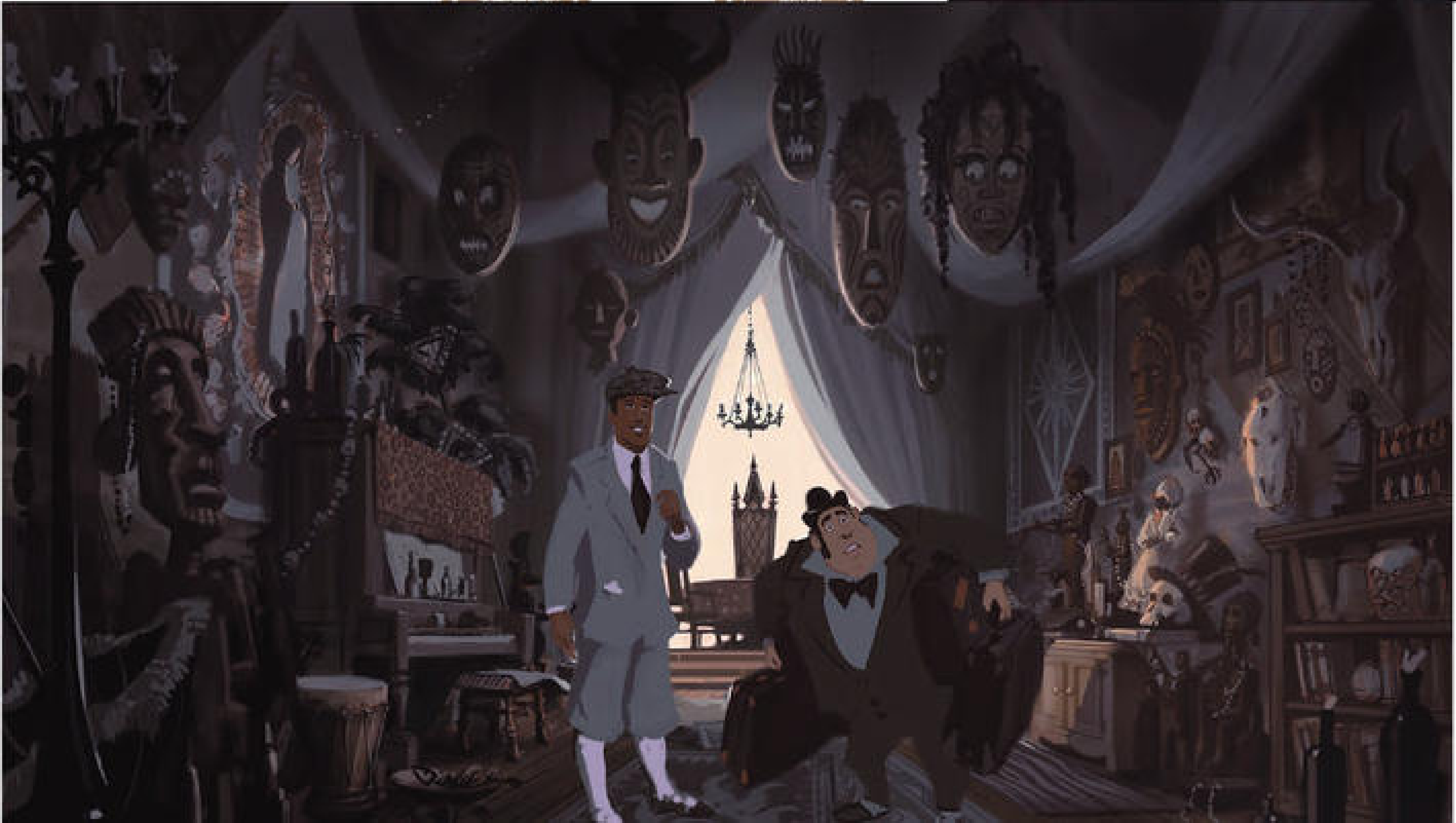


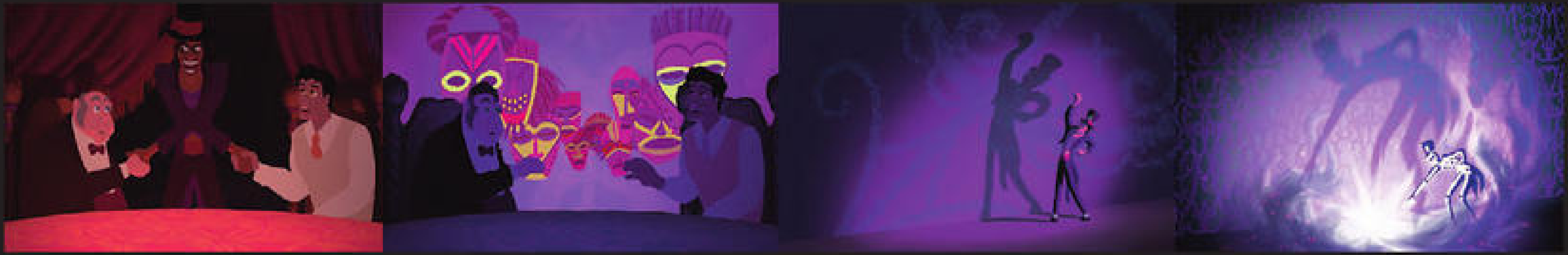
Ian Gooding | digital

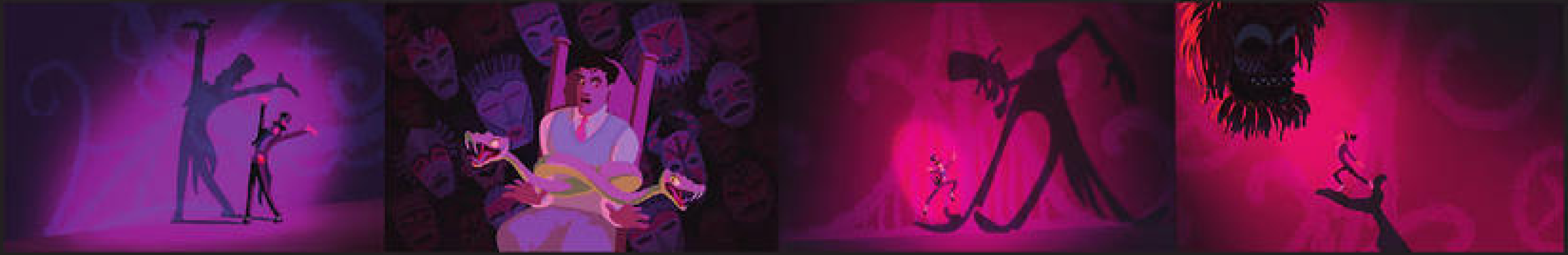
Armand Baltazar | digital

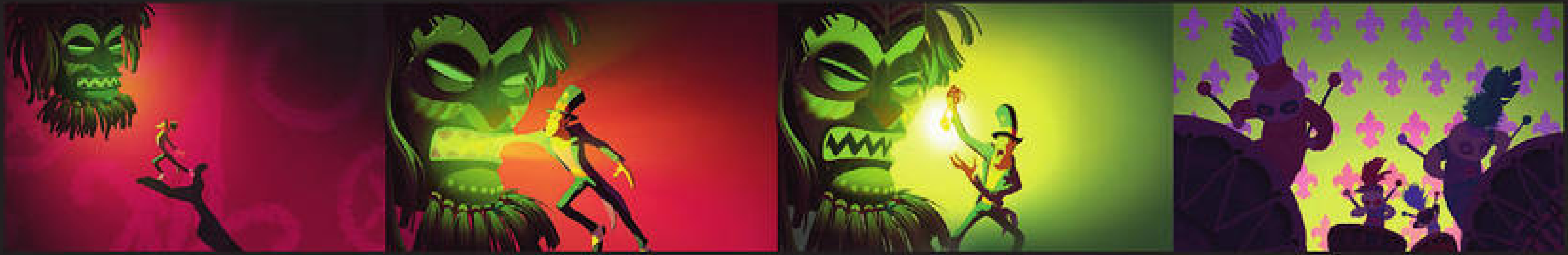


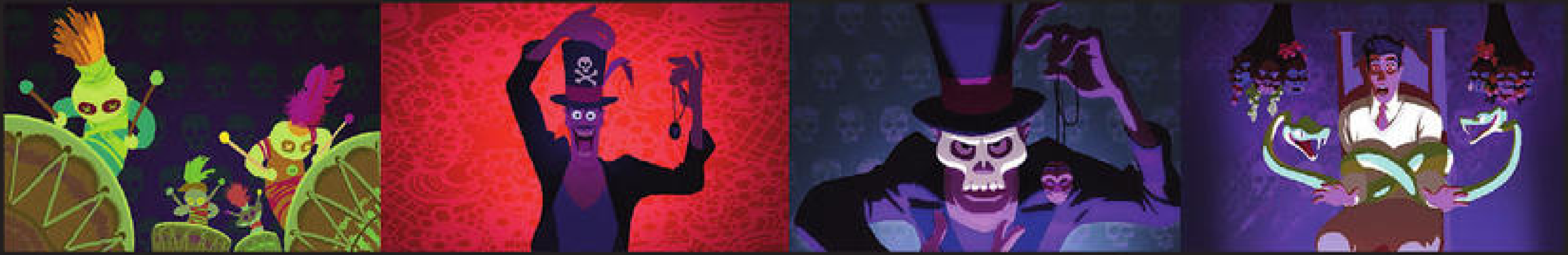
James Aaron Finch | digital

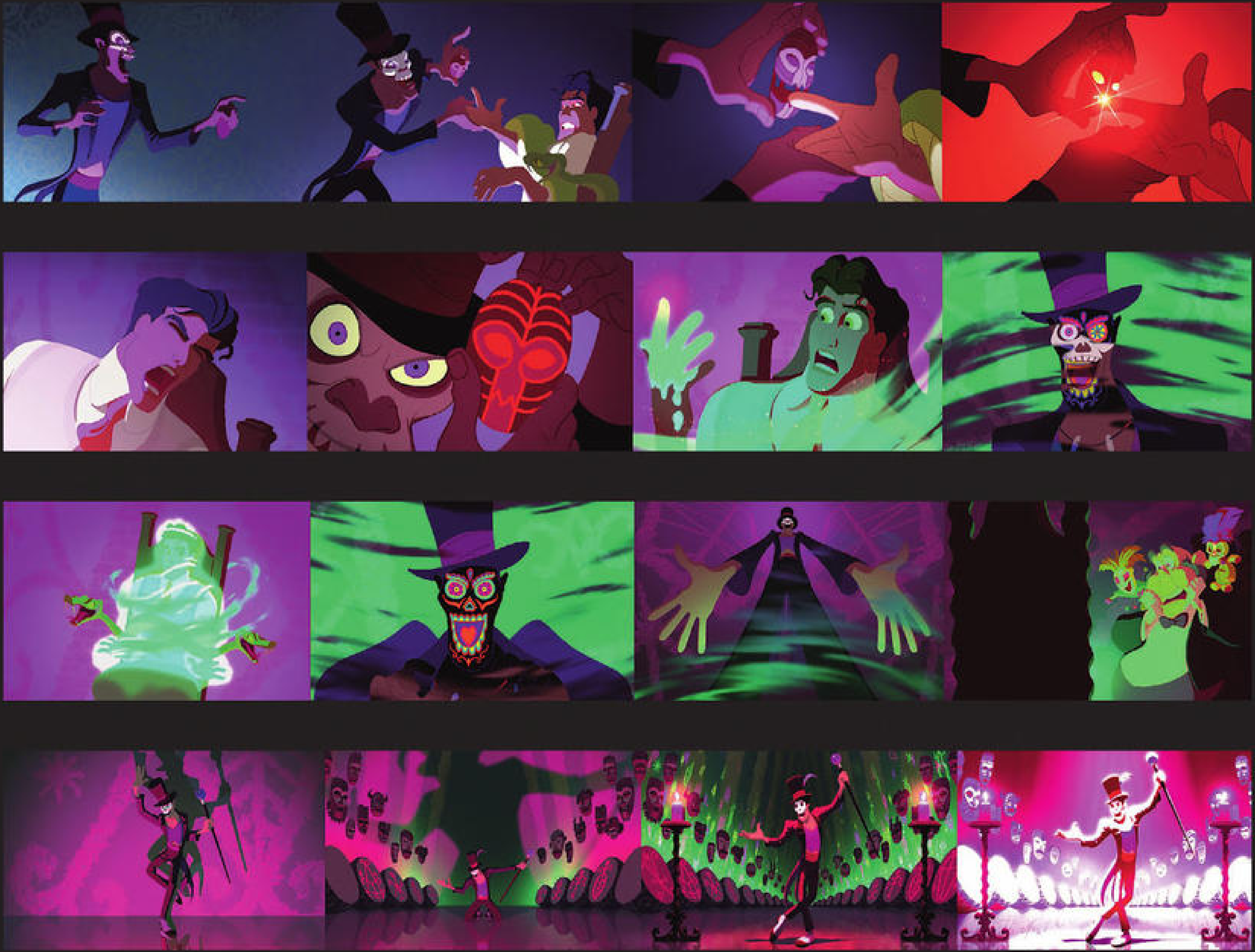












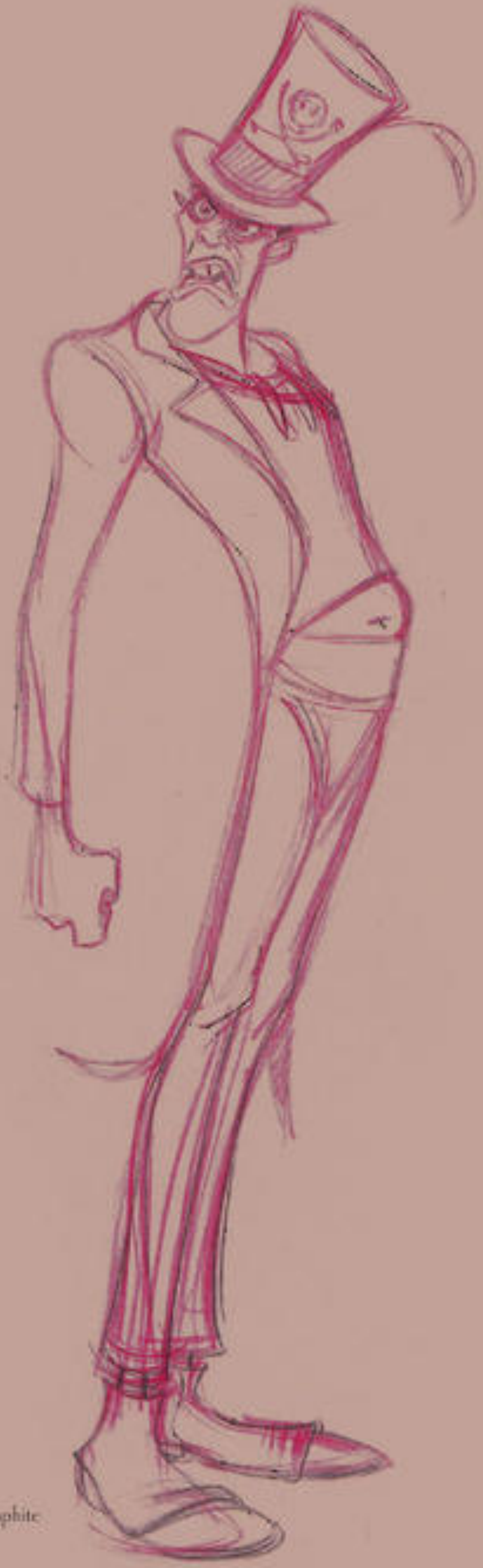
Color Scripts | Ian Gooding | digital

DR. FACILIER

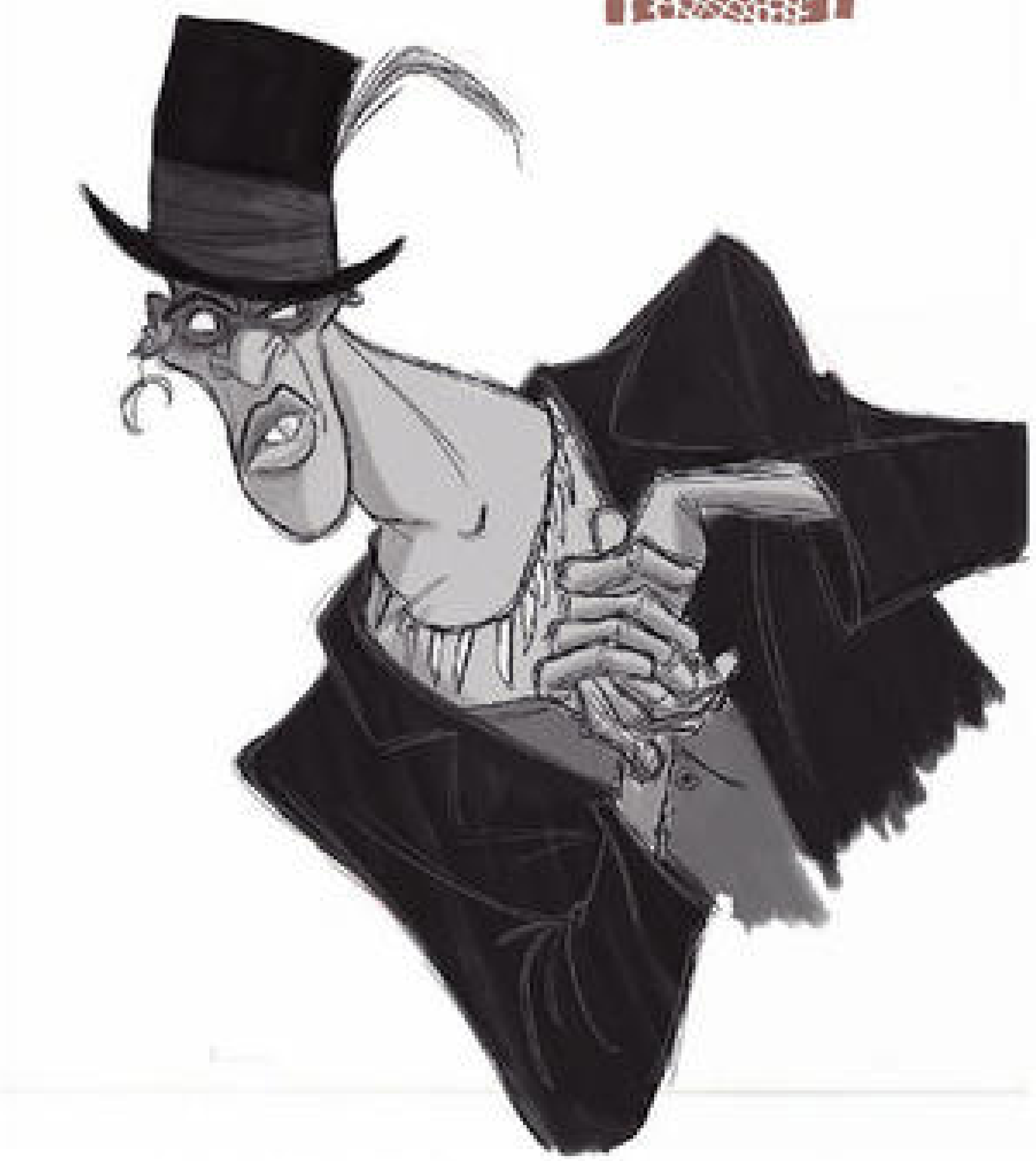
At home with the mysterious, akin to the shadows, both alluring and alarming, Dr. Facilier is the French Quarter voodoo peddler who causes no shortage of trouble for Prince Naveen and Tiana.

Initially, visual development artist Sue Nichols had a more polished model in mind for Facilier. "He was all about money in this story. Getting that quick buck by tricking people into coming in and doing his stuff. And if you've been to New Orleans, downtown, it is full of people who are slicked up a little more to try to 'sell their wares' and all. So I wanted him to be the 'Diamond Jim' kind of guy from the 1920s. And then as the story evolved, we thought we needed to still keep the master aspect in there—you know, a fine jacket, but no shirt underneath.

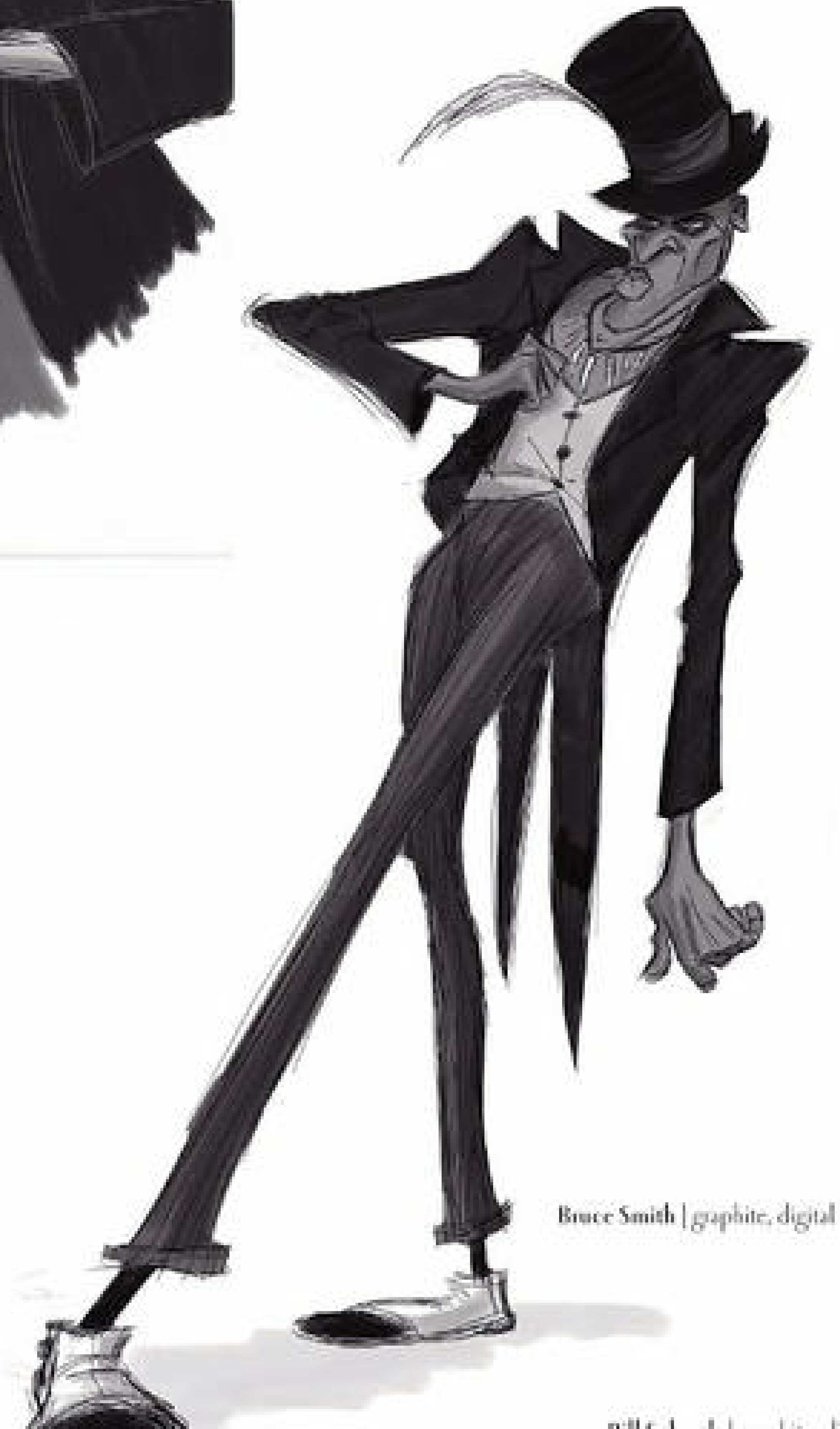
The character's edges may have been intentionally roughened, but the performance style remained the epitome of smooth. "It's always great to get the villain," Bruce Smith says. "And the villain is always that character that holds up the film and keeps everything interesting and on edge. I try to let that sit in the back of my head, because I don't want to put that type of pressure on myself. But at the same time, that's why I'm here. To feel that type of pressure, and to rise to that occasion. I always knew I had it in me personally. You know, I *totally* can do a villain, and give it a different take that maybe our audiences have not really experienced or seen before. Luckily in this case I've really got a very unique villain—a great villain."



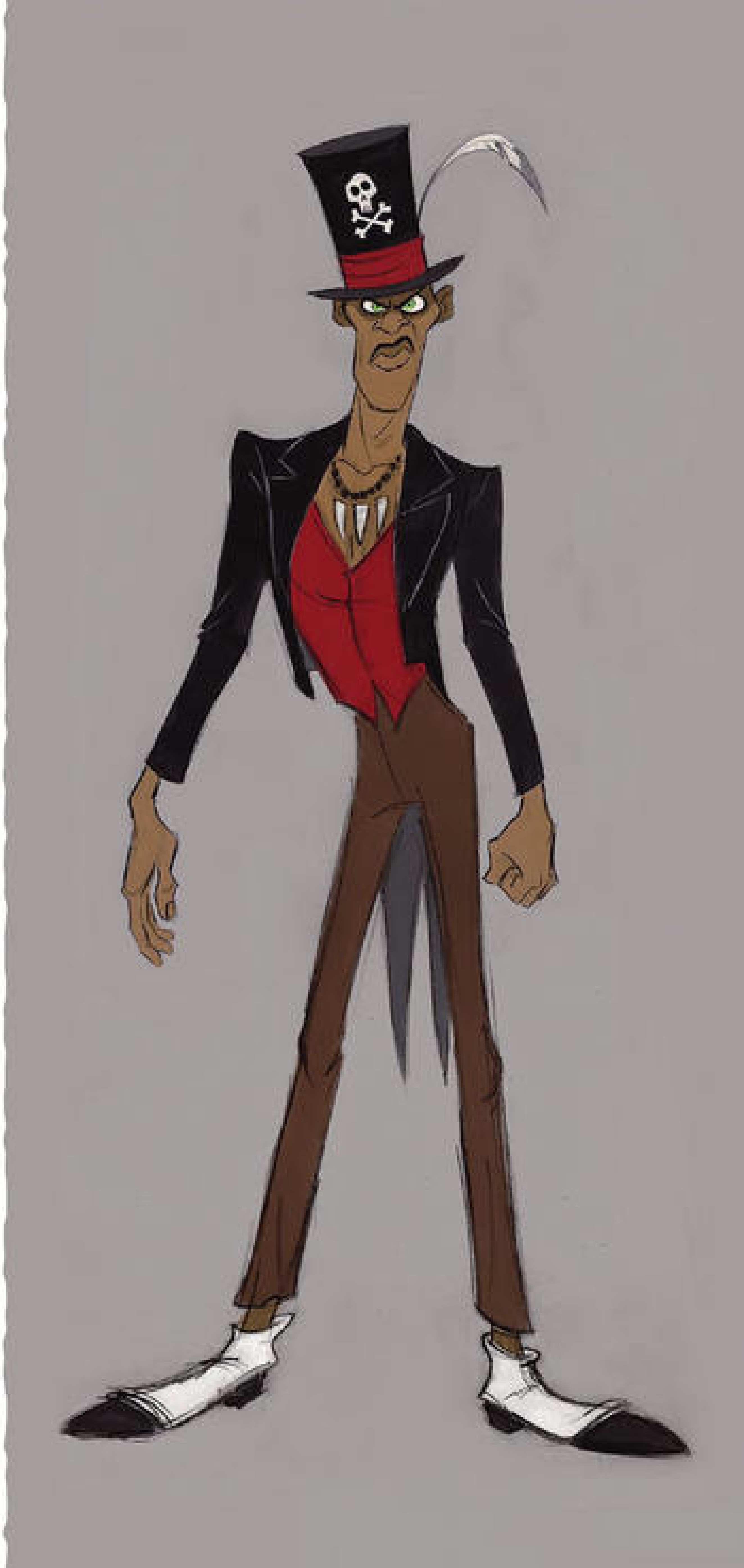
Bruce Smith | graphite



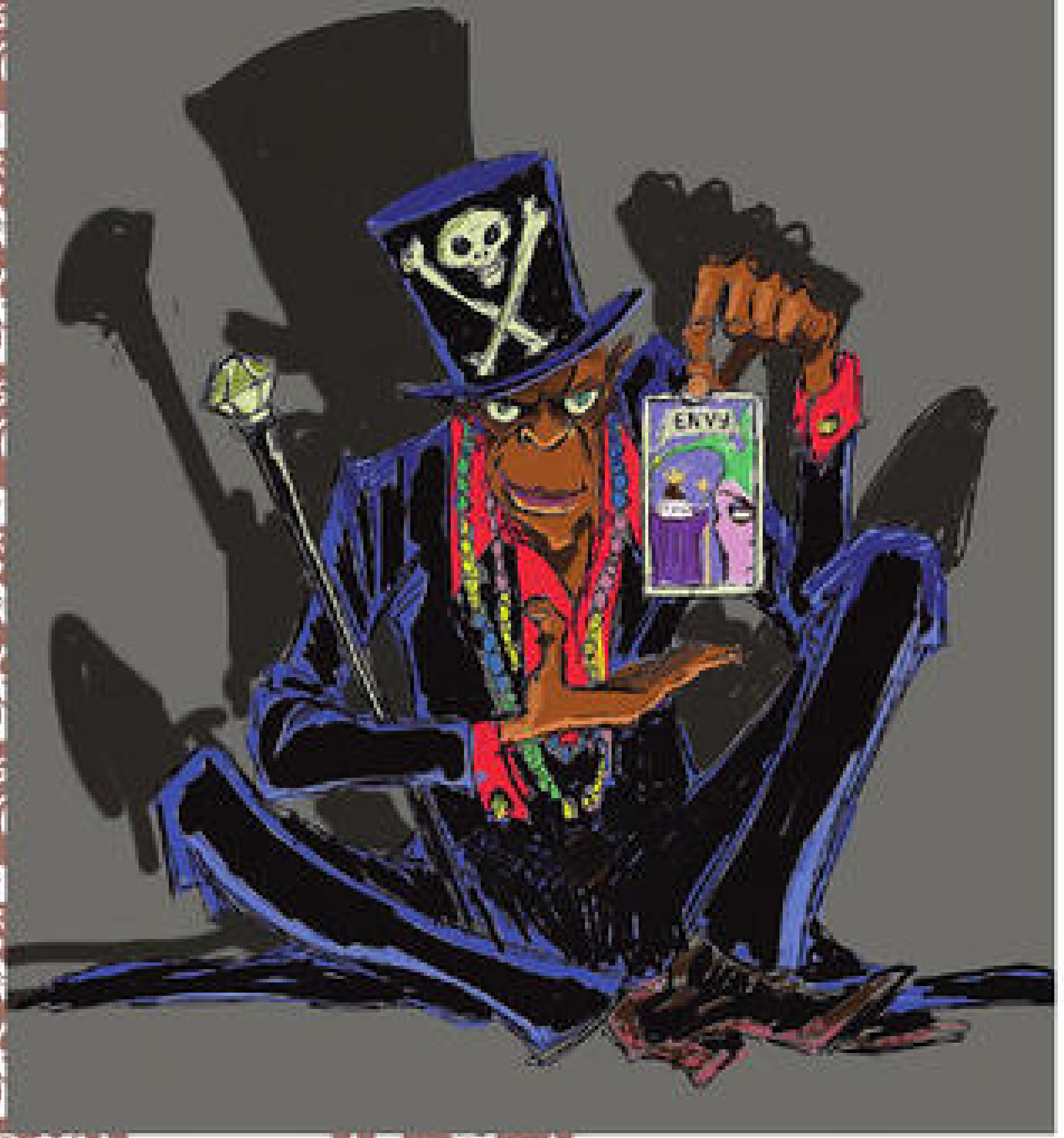
Bruce Smith | graphite, digital



Bruce Smith | graphite, digital

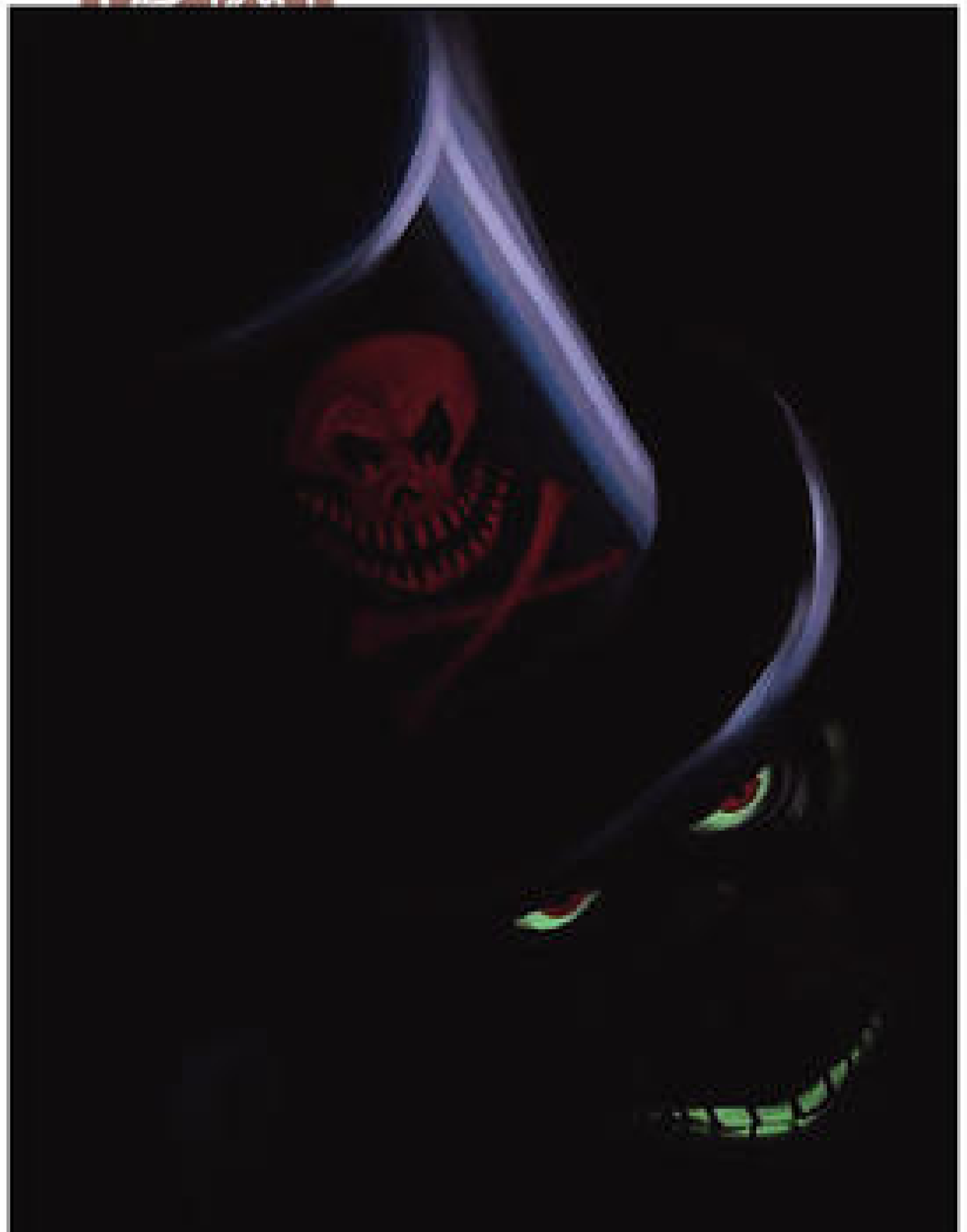


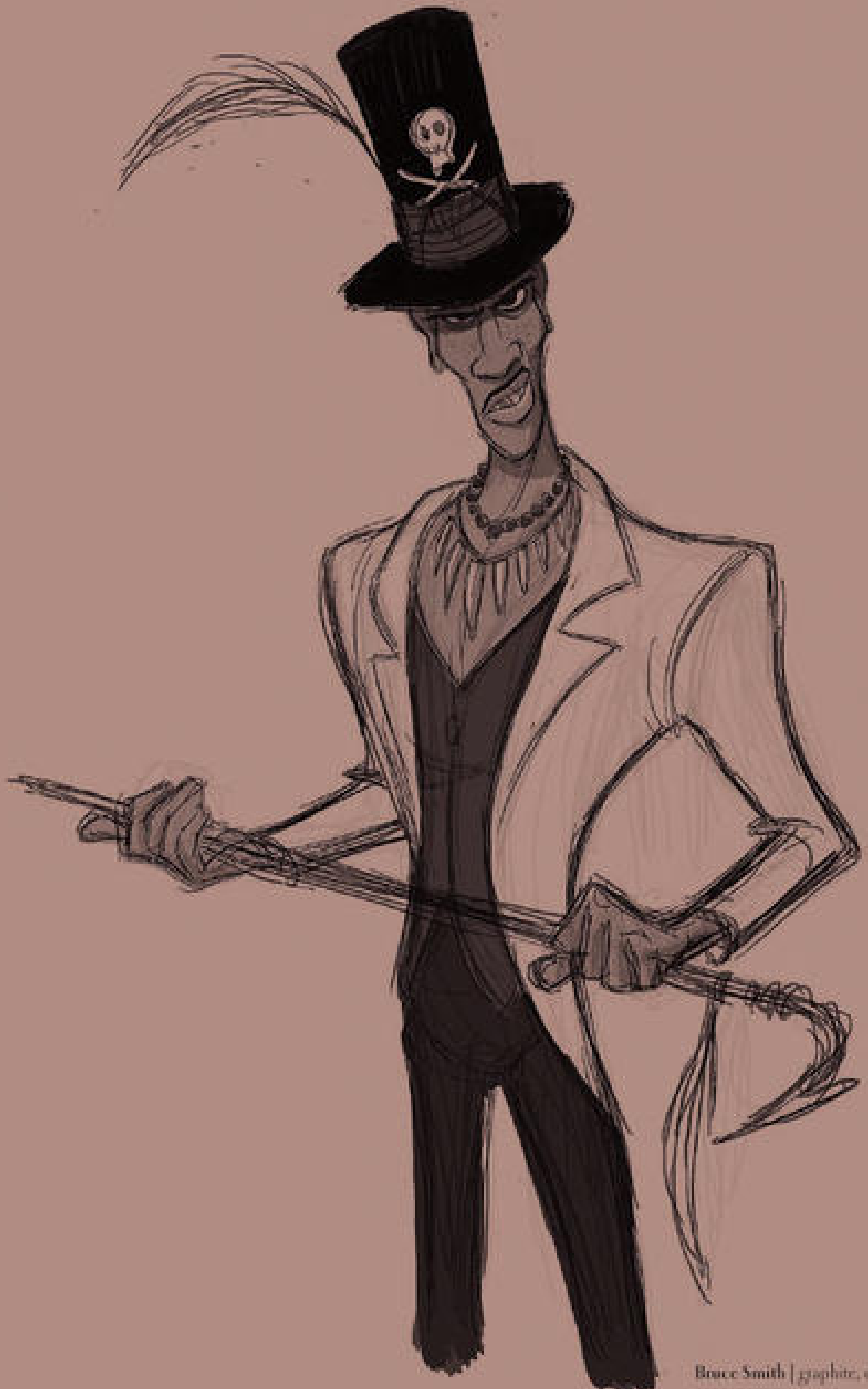
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



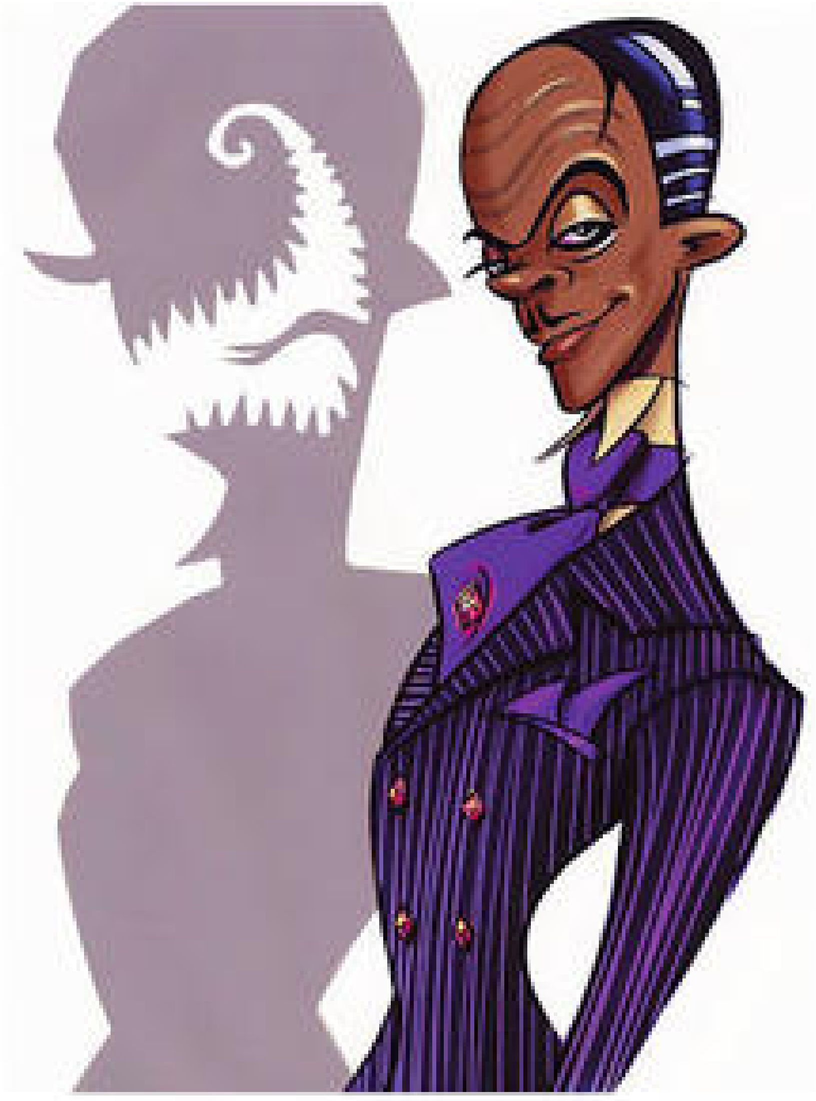
John Musker | digital

Sue Nichols | digital



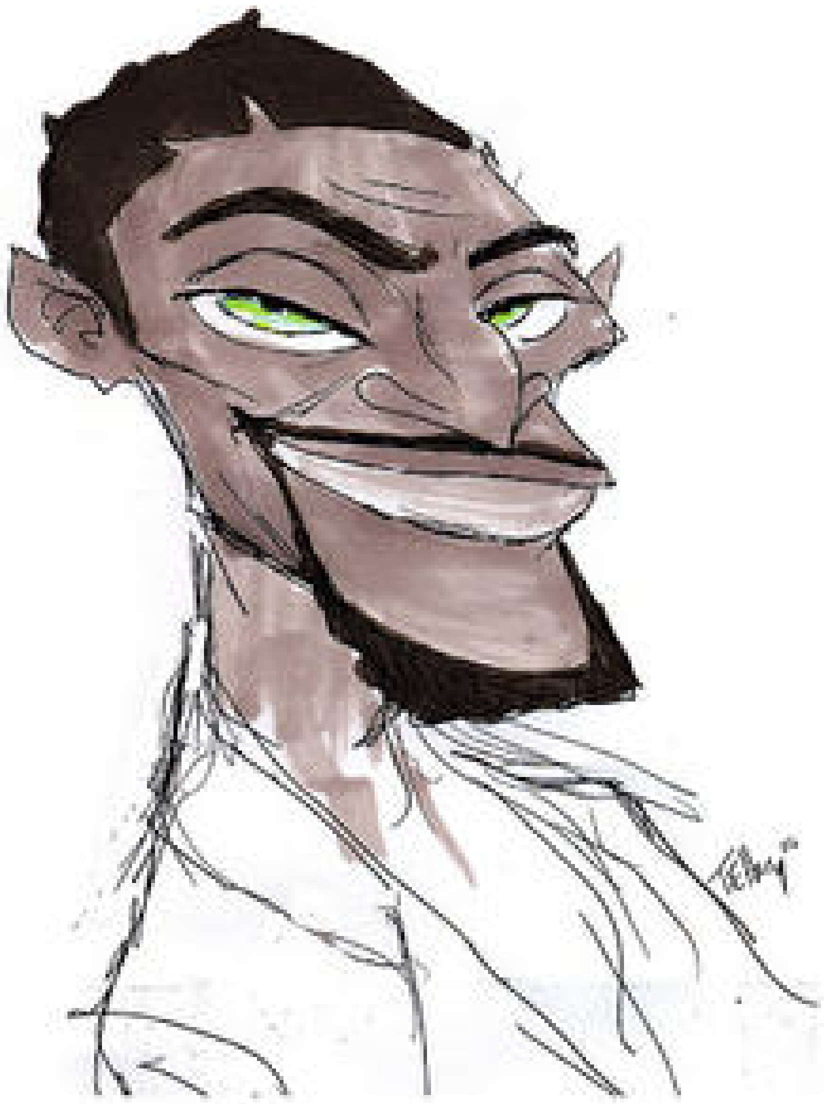


Bruce Smith | graphite, digital

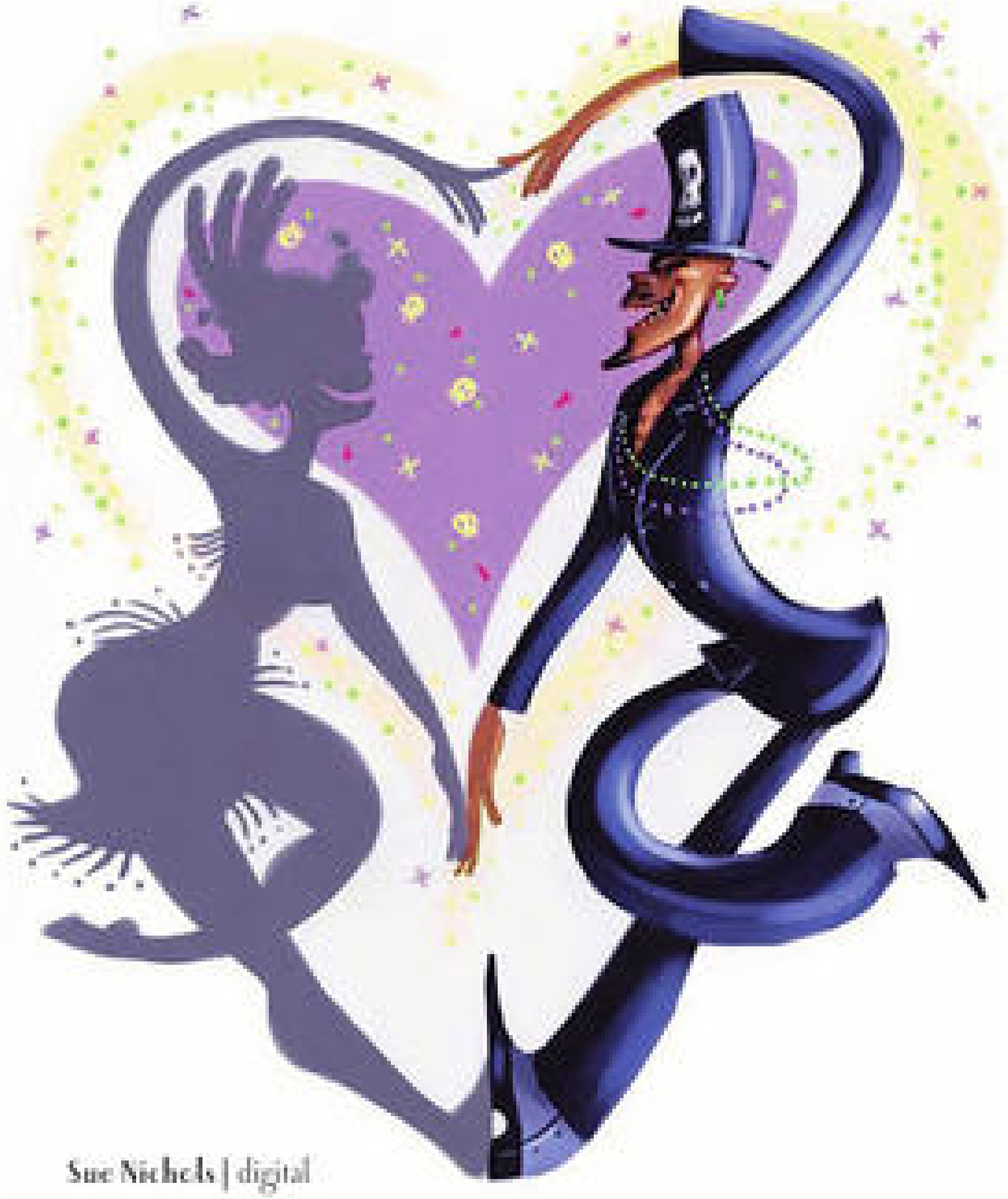


Sue Nichols | digital

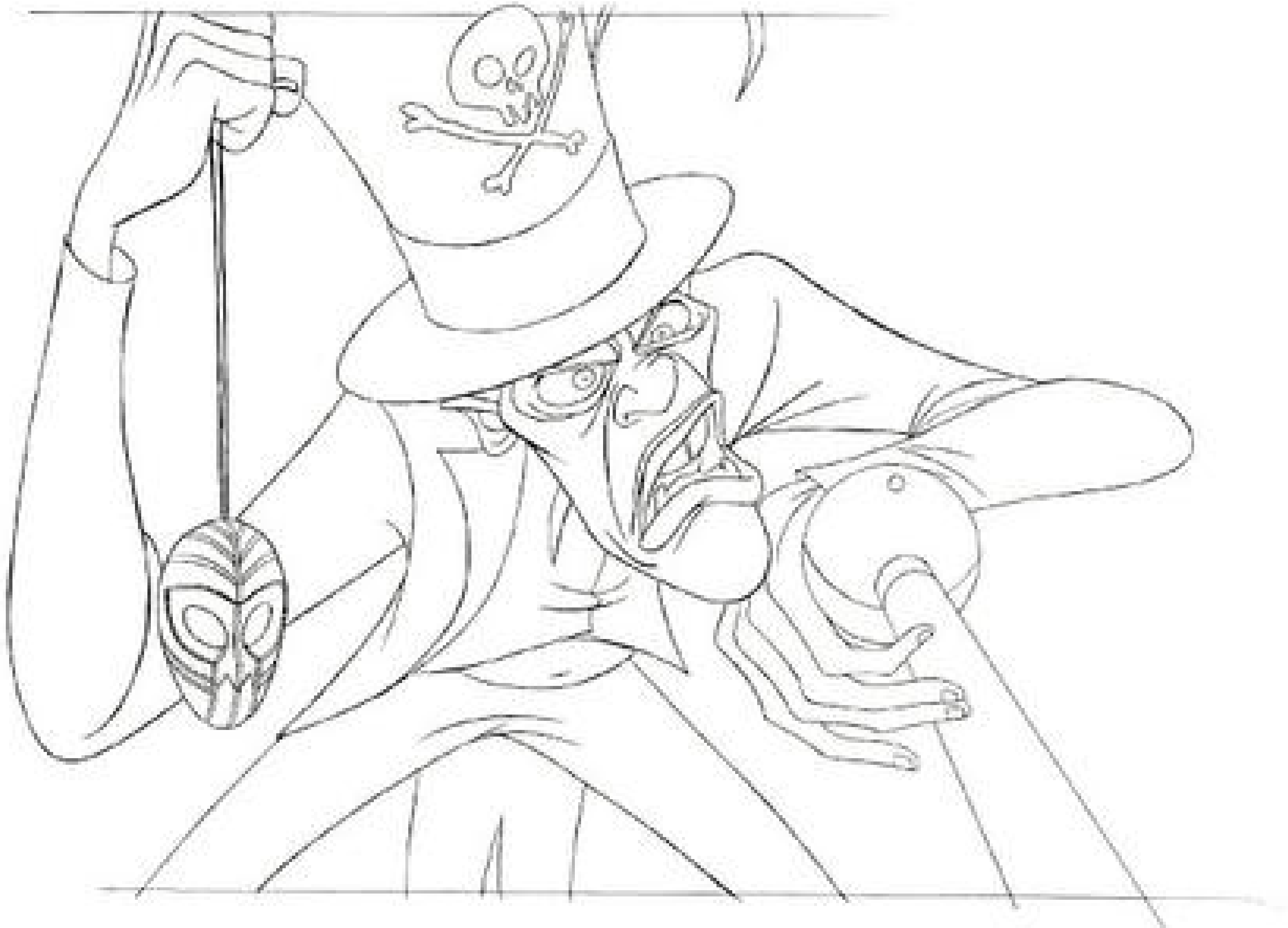
> "He's musical, he's threatening, he's tall, he's lean, he's thin. He can be very sweet. He's handsome. He's graceful. And I think all that stuff is, in very contemporary animation anyway, rare to see in that type of villain."
> —BRUCE SMITH, supervising animator



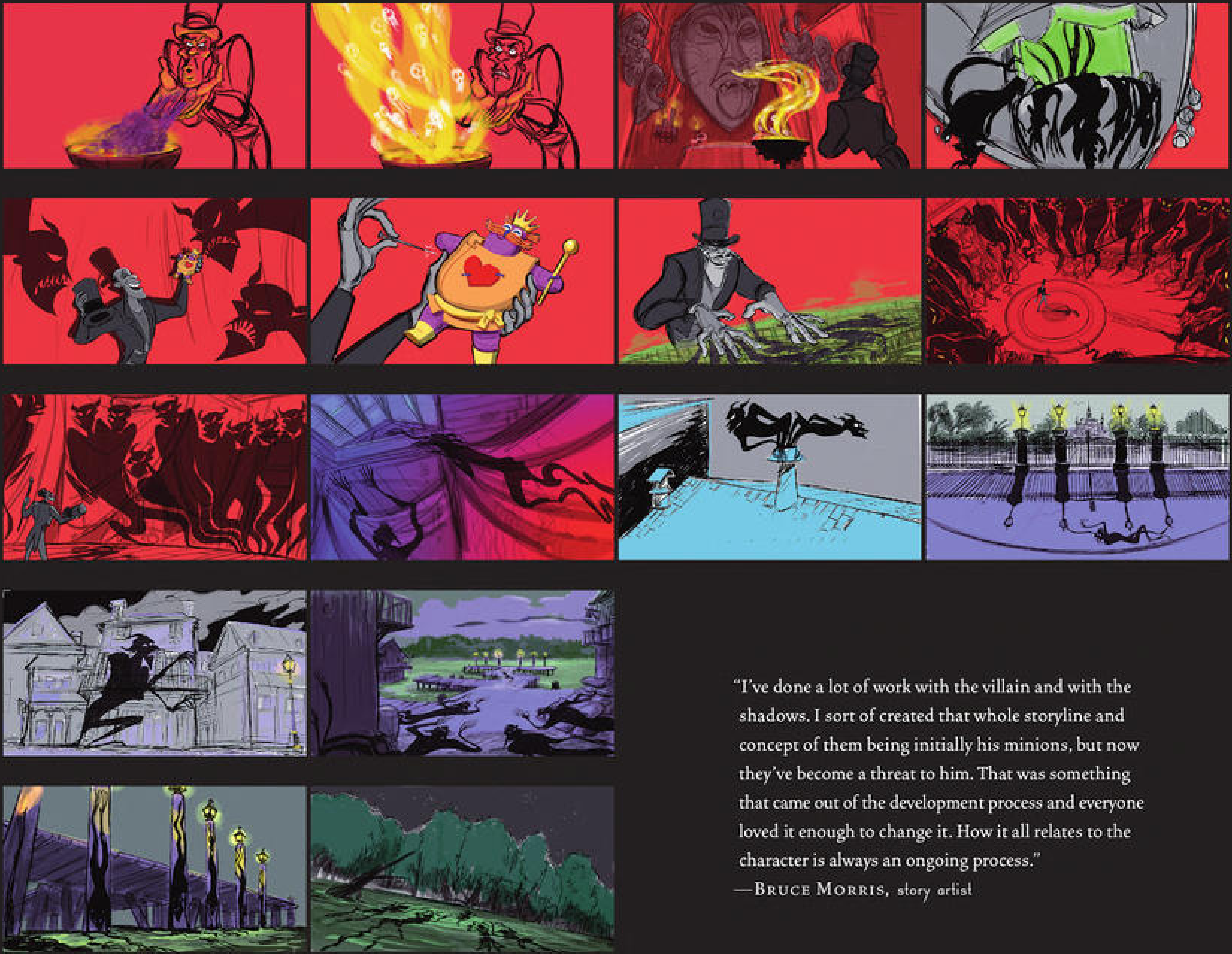
Tom Ellery | pen, marker



Sue Nichols | digital



Tracy Lee | graphite



Storyboards | Bruce Morris | digital

> "I've done a lot of work with the villain and with the shadows. I sort of created that whole storyline and concept of them being initially his minions, but now they've become a threat to him. That was something that came out of the development process and everyone loved it enough to change it. How it all relates to the character is always an ongoing process."
>
> —BRUCE MORRIS, story artist

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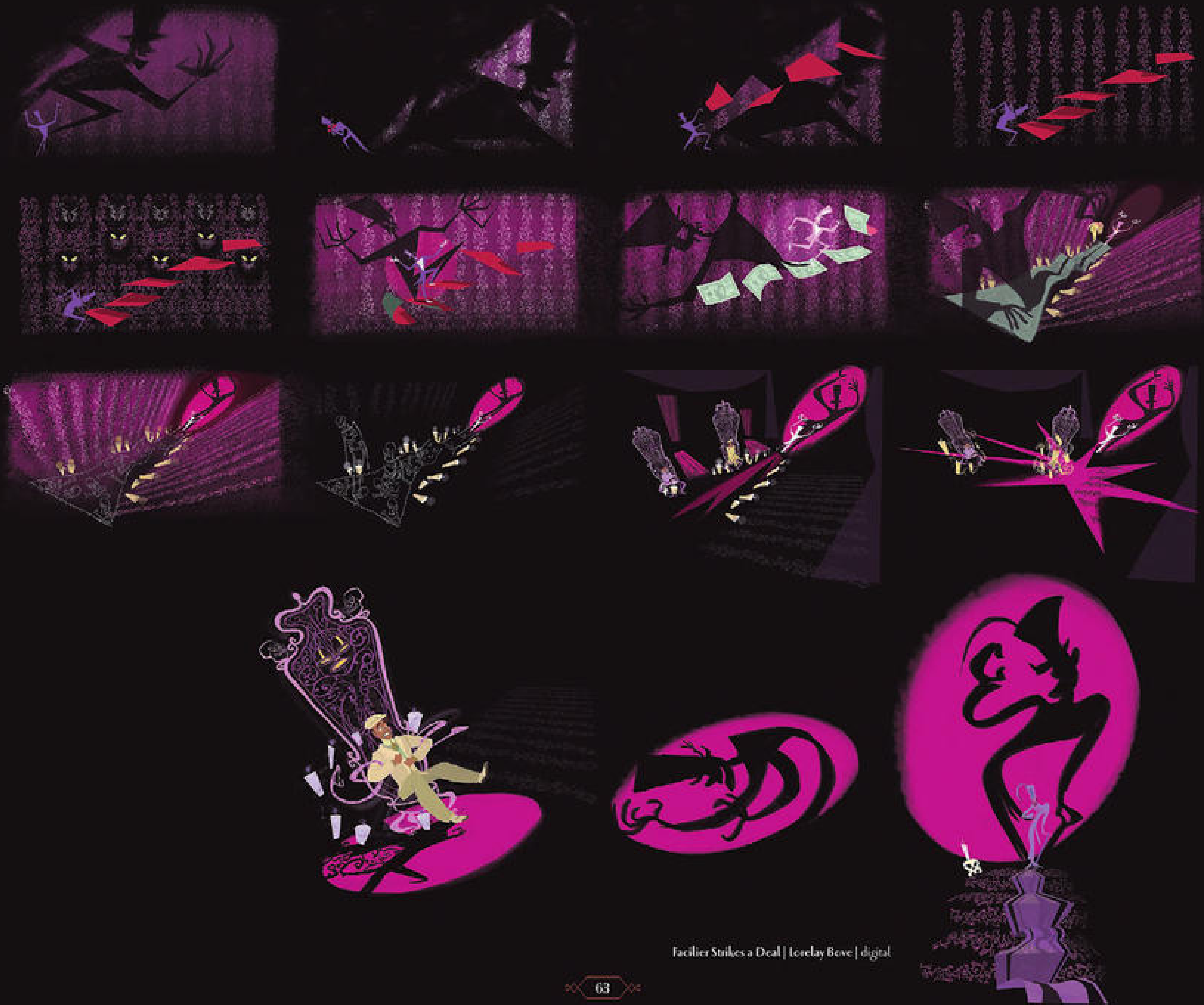
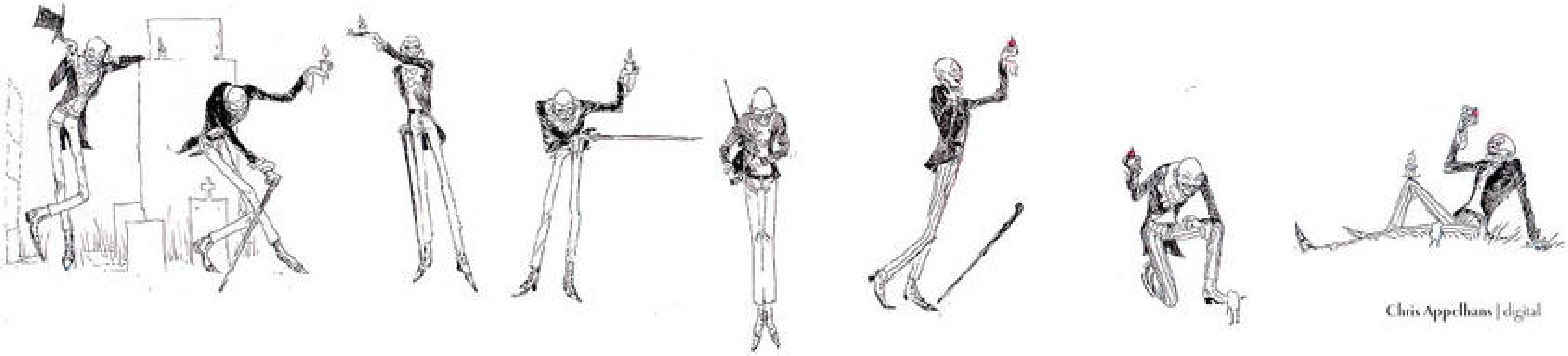
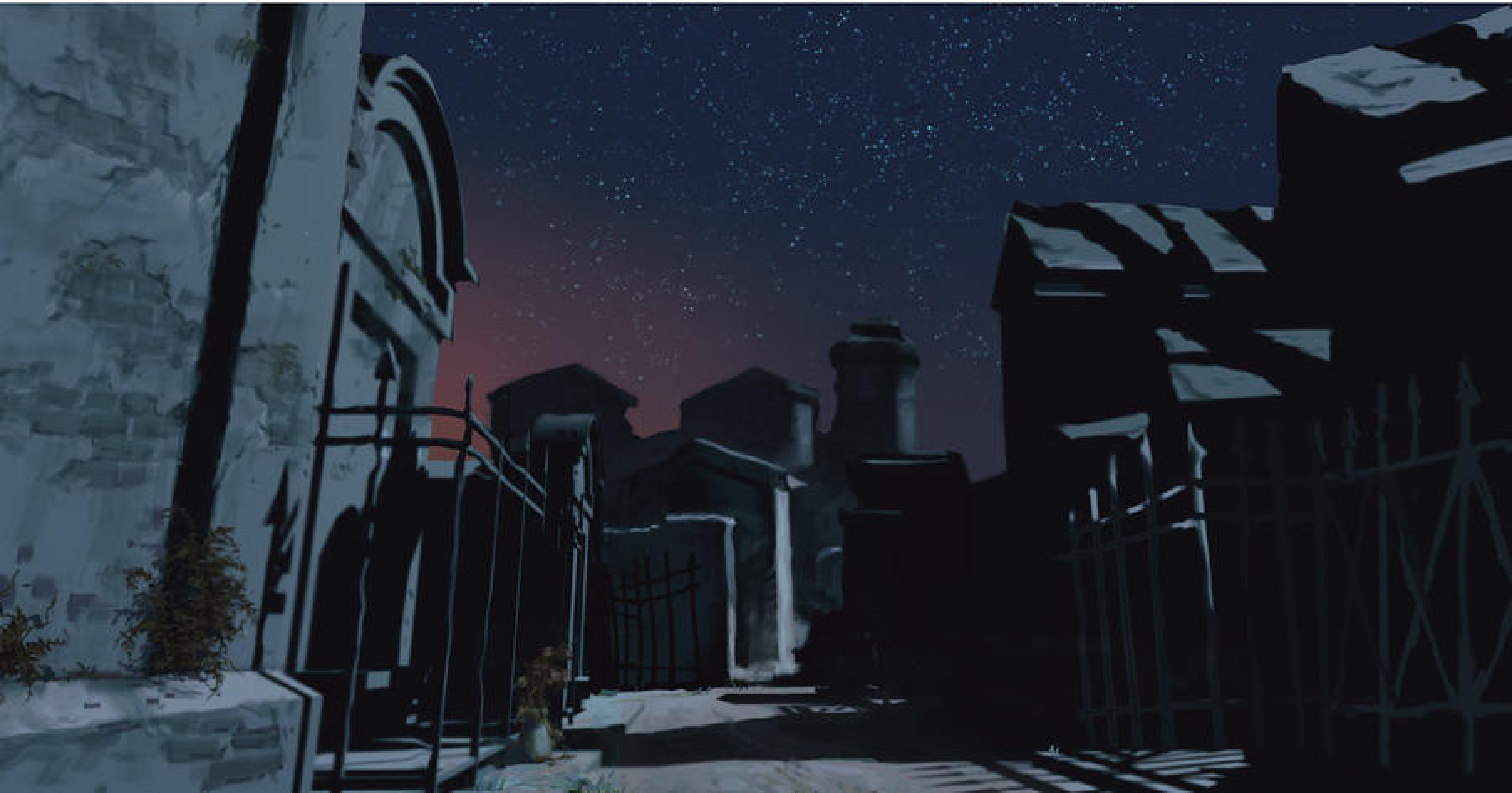


Facilier Strikes a Deal | Lorelay Bove | digital



Chris Appelhans | digital

Sunny Apinchapong | digital



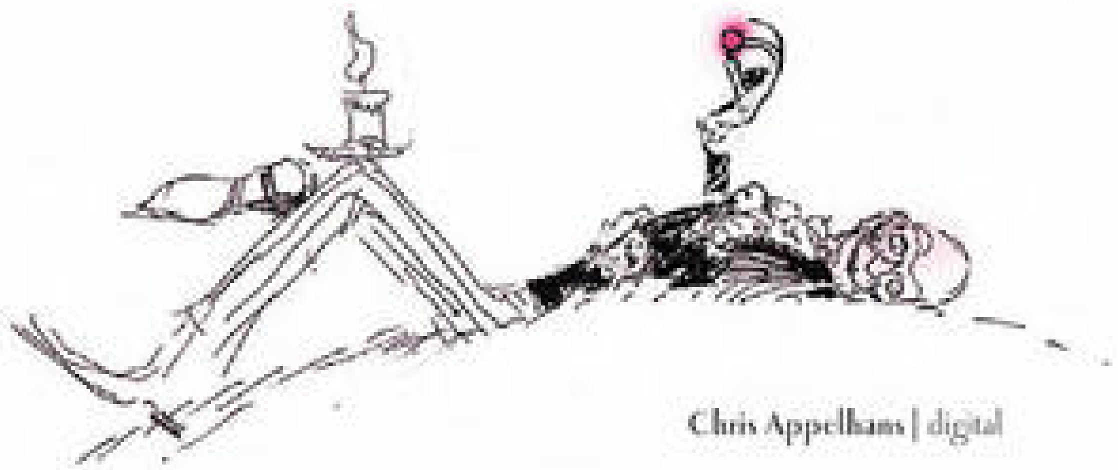
LAFAYETTE CEMETERY No. 1

Just down the way from the La Bouff mansion is Lafayette Cemetery No. 1, an integral part of life in the Garden District. Residents and visitors alike take strolls through the grounds, enjoying the history and beauty of the storied burial site. Located on Washington Avenue, Lafayette Cemetery No. 1 was established in 1833 by the city of Lafayette (later incorporated into the city of New Orleans).

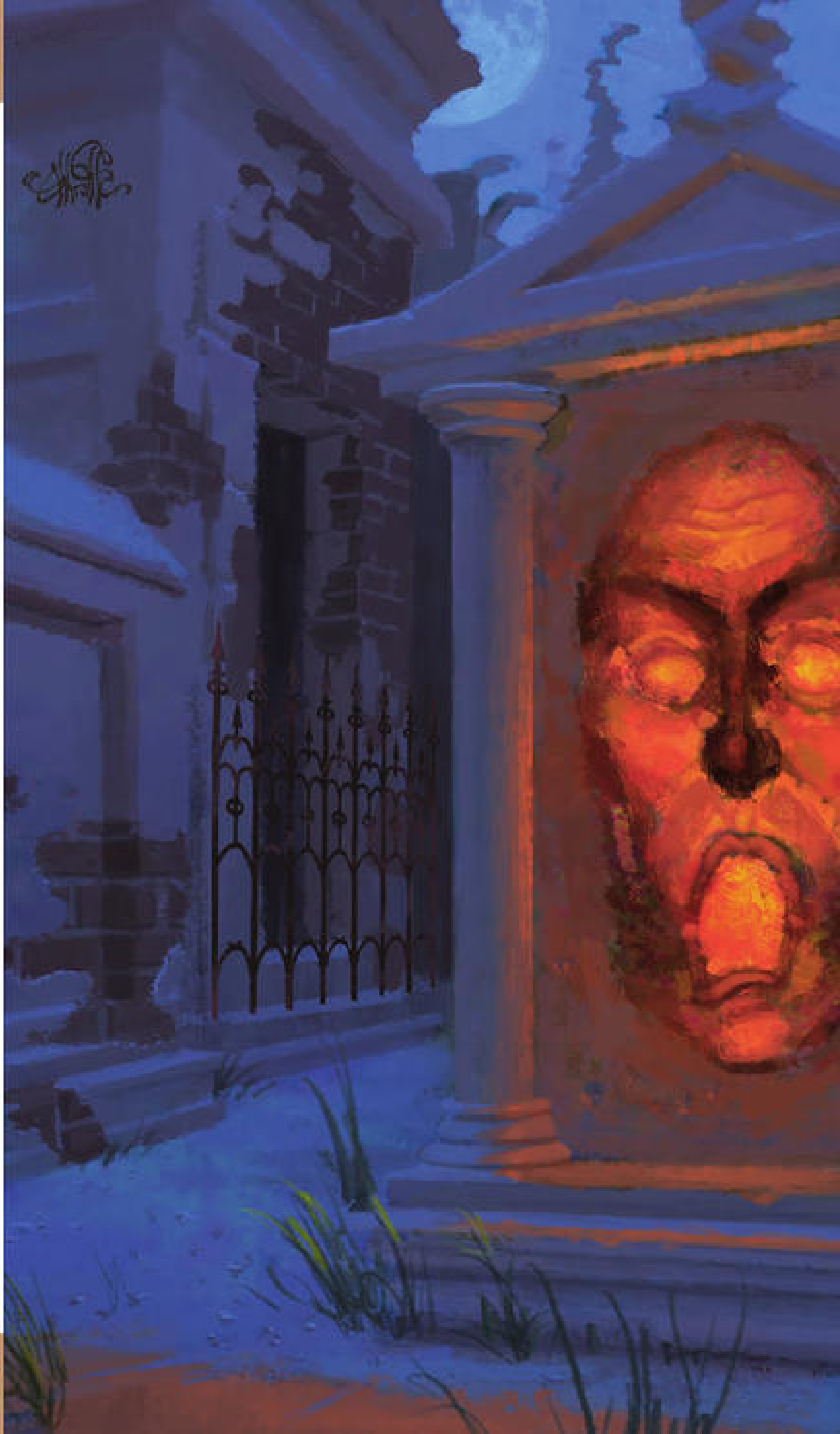
Common to cemeteries in New Orleans, most of the graves in Lafayette are aboveground tombs, or vaults in the walls that surround the cemetery. Since New Orleans is lower than sea level, below-ground graves historically had a creepy tendency to discharge their contents during high-water tables and floods.

This is not the first time that Lafayette Cemetery has been the setting of sinister doings; fans of Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* and her other books will no doubt be familiar with its otherworldly potential.

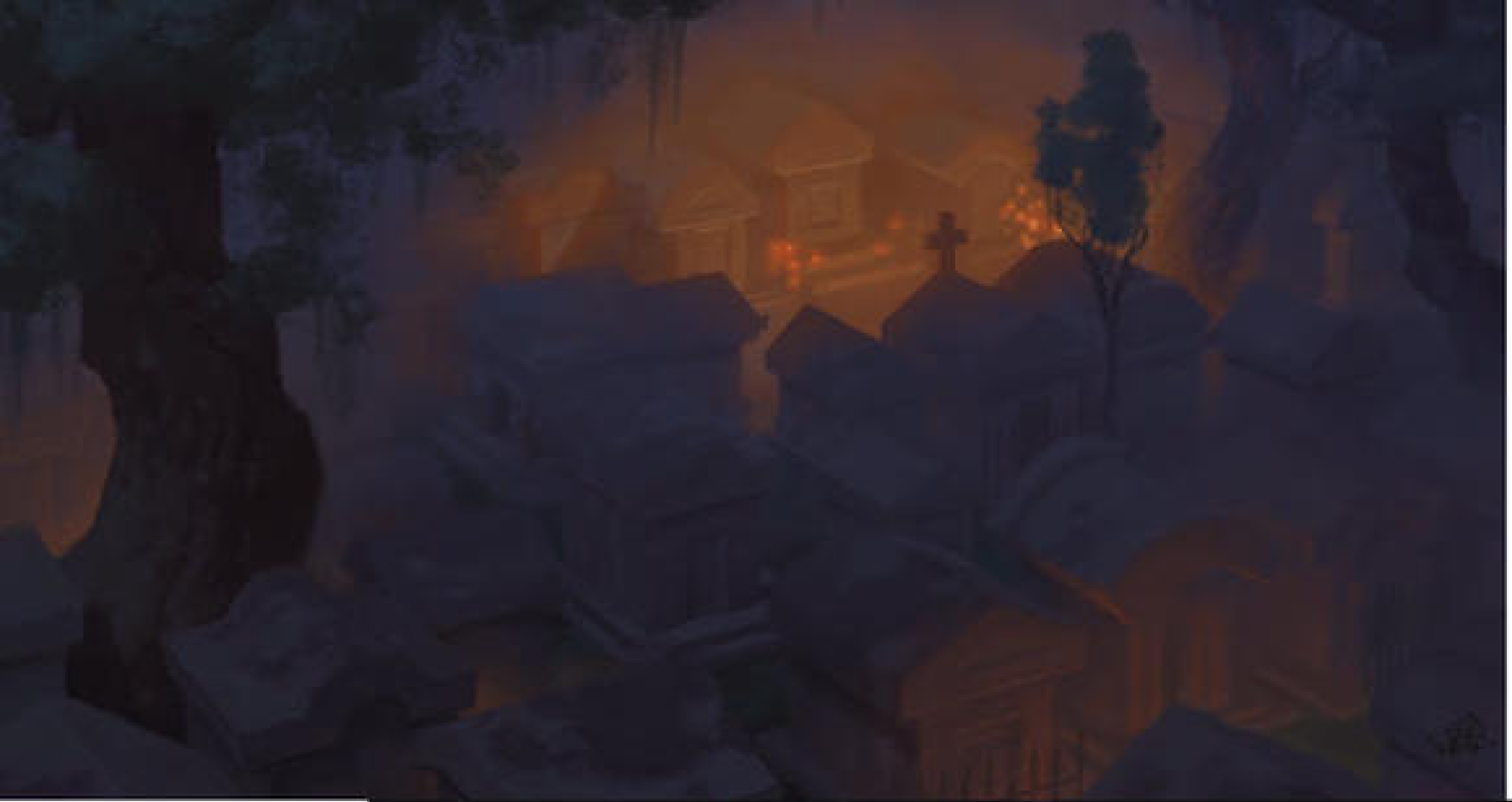
The Partners in Preservation organization states, "A veritable history of the city—yellow fever epidemics, immigration, funerary symbolism, architecture—is reflected in the walls and tombs of Lafayette No. 1."



Chris Appelhans | digital

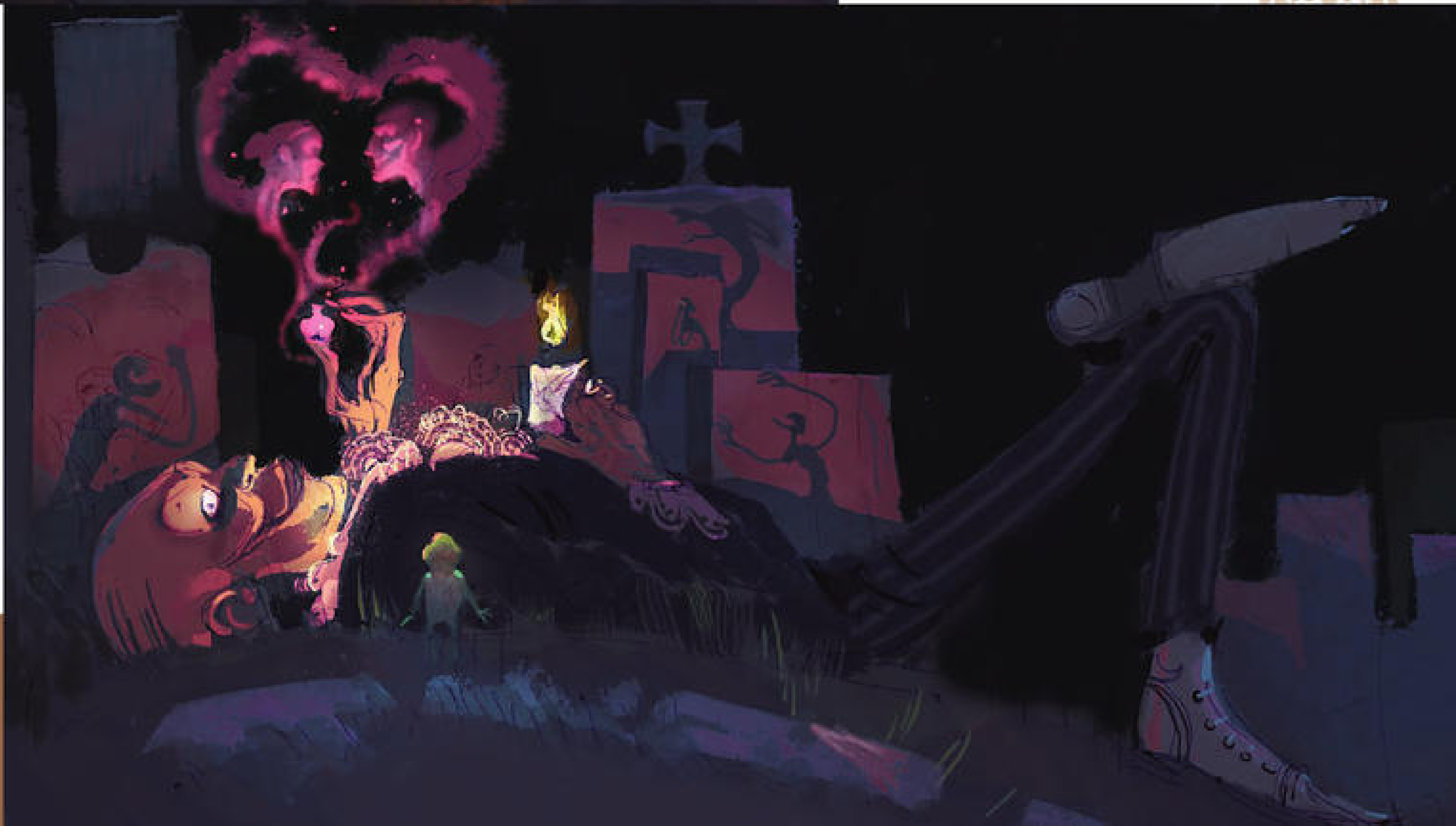


Craig Elliot | digital

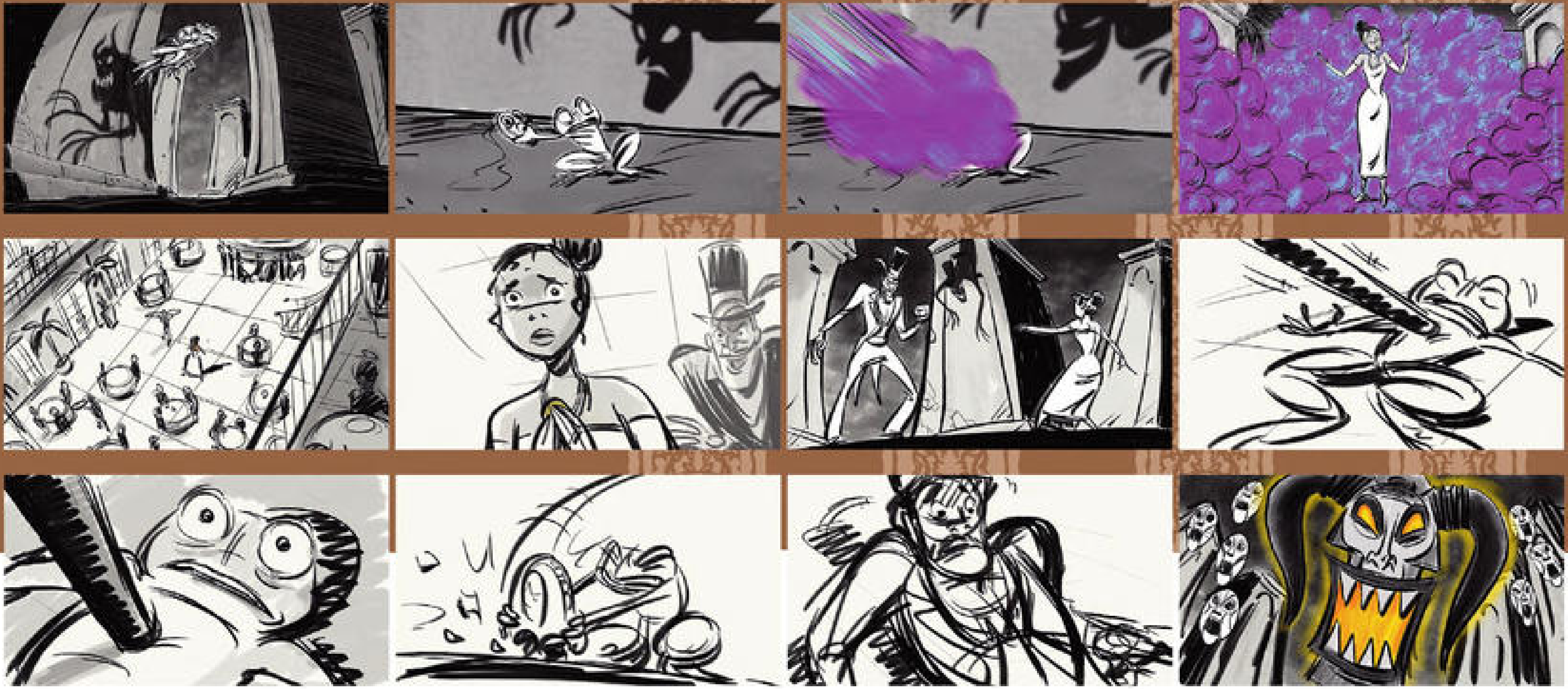


Craig Elliot | digital

"The cemetery plays into all of the history, architecture, magic, and setting fundamentals of our movie. It's an appropriate place for Facilier to meet his fate, and for many threads of our story to twine together."
—PETER DEL VECHO, producer



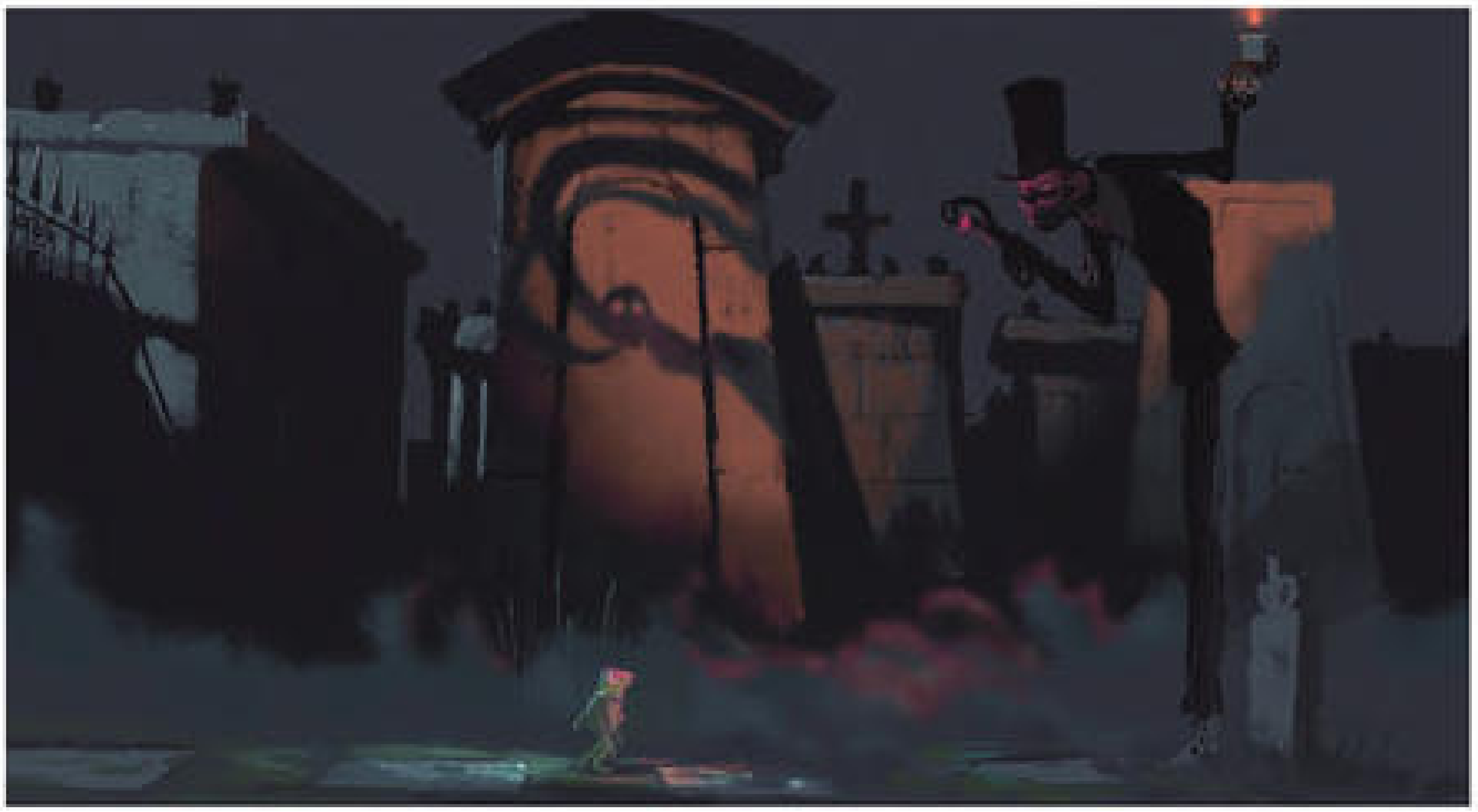
Chris Appelhans | digital



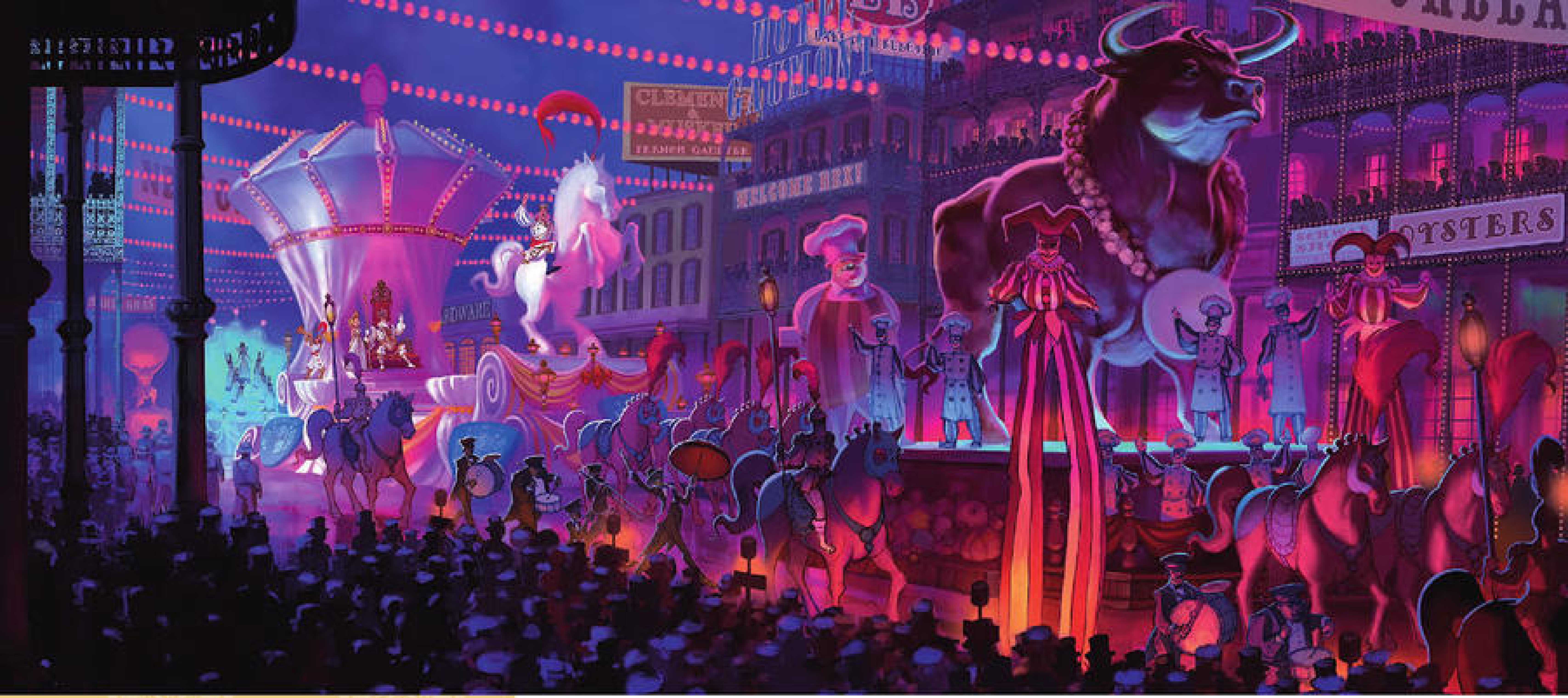
Storyboards | Don Hall | digital

"While Ron and John were writing the original script, they had a few story artists drawing up visual ideas of story development, which they assembled into a beat board, which is a visual outline of the movie. They intentionally didn't have any captions or text to explain the beats, because they were adamant that our story reels should read visually, and not rely on dialogue to convey story points. They said that we should be able to turn the sound off and still have the story communicate to the viewer."

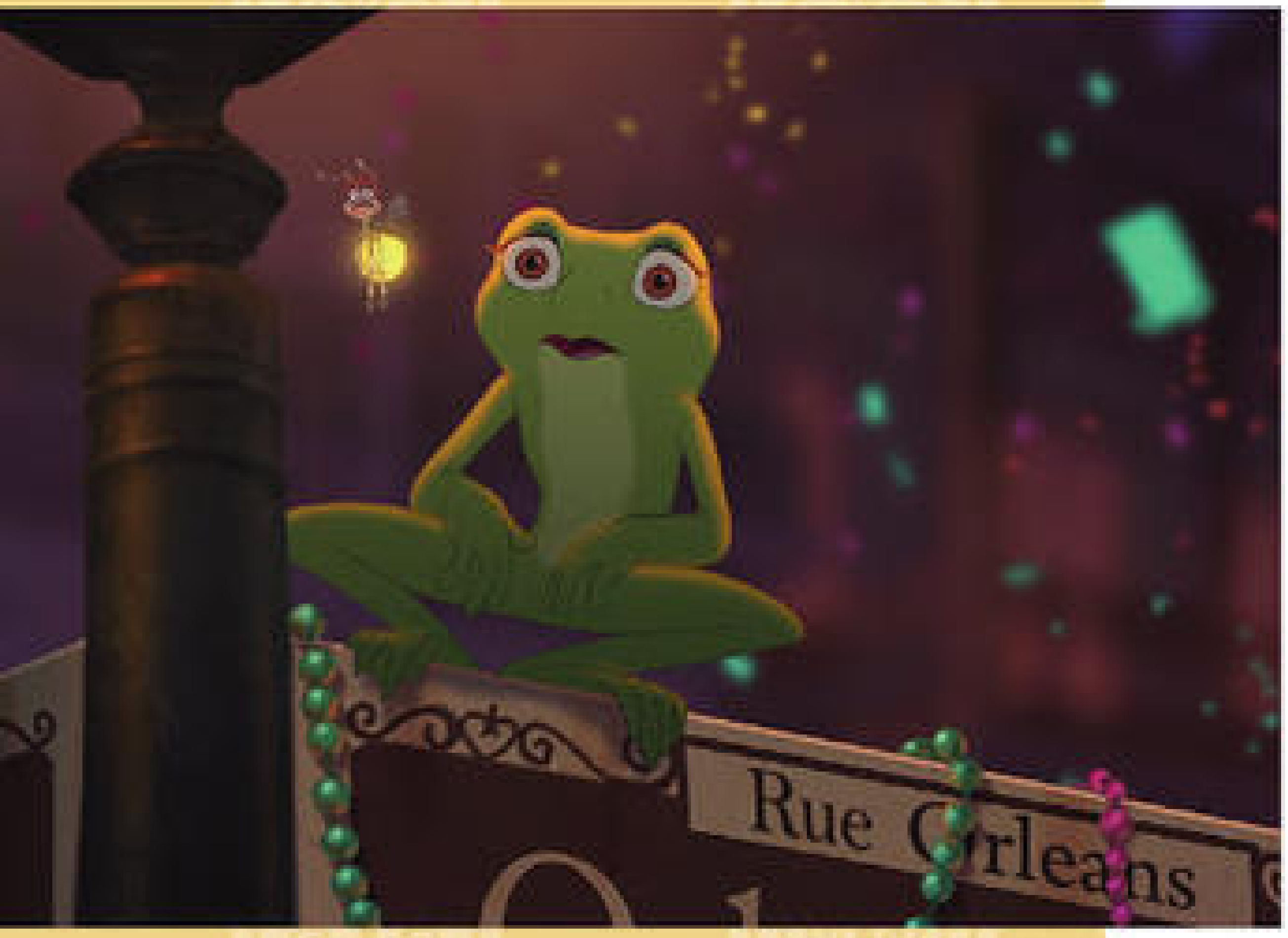
—Don Hall, *head of story*



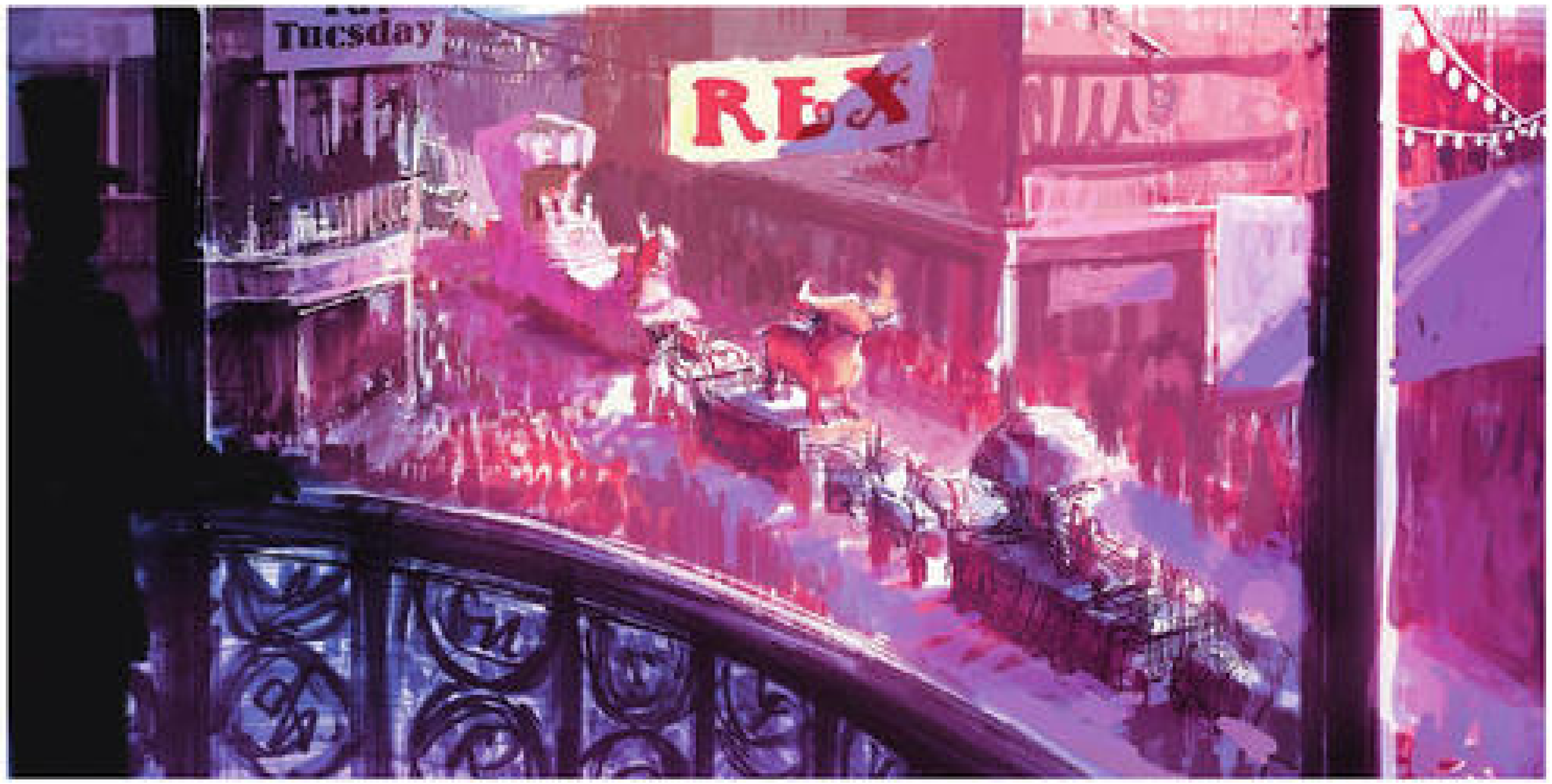
Chris Appelhans | digital


CLEMEN
FRENCH GALLERY
WELCOME REX
EDWARD
OYSTERS

Armand Baltazar | digital


Rue Orleans

Color Styling/Compositing | digital


Tuesday
REX

Armand Baltazar | digital

MARDI GRAS

"There's a scale of visual opulence that we want to reach with this film that is . . . challenging," effects animation supervisor Marlon West admits. "We want it to look really rich and . . . just cool-looking, you know?"

The cultural characteristics of the Big Easy certainly offer artists opportunities for cool: food, music, and a certain type of highly stylized and excessive socializing, best symbolized by the annual festival of Mardi Gras. An elaborate series of outdoor pageants and indoor tableau balls, this carnival culminates on "Fat" or Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent.

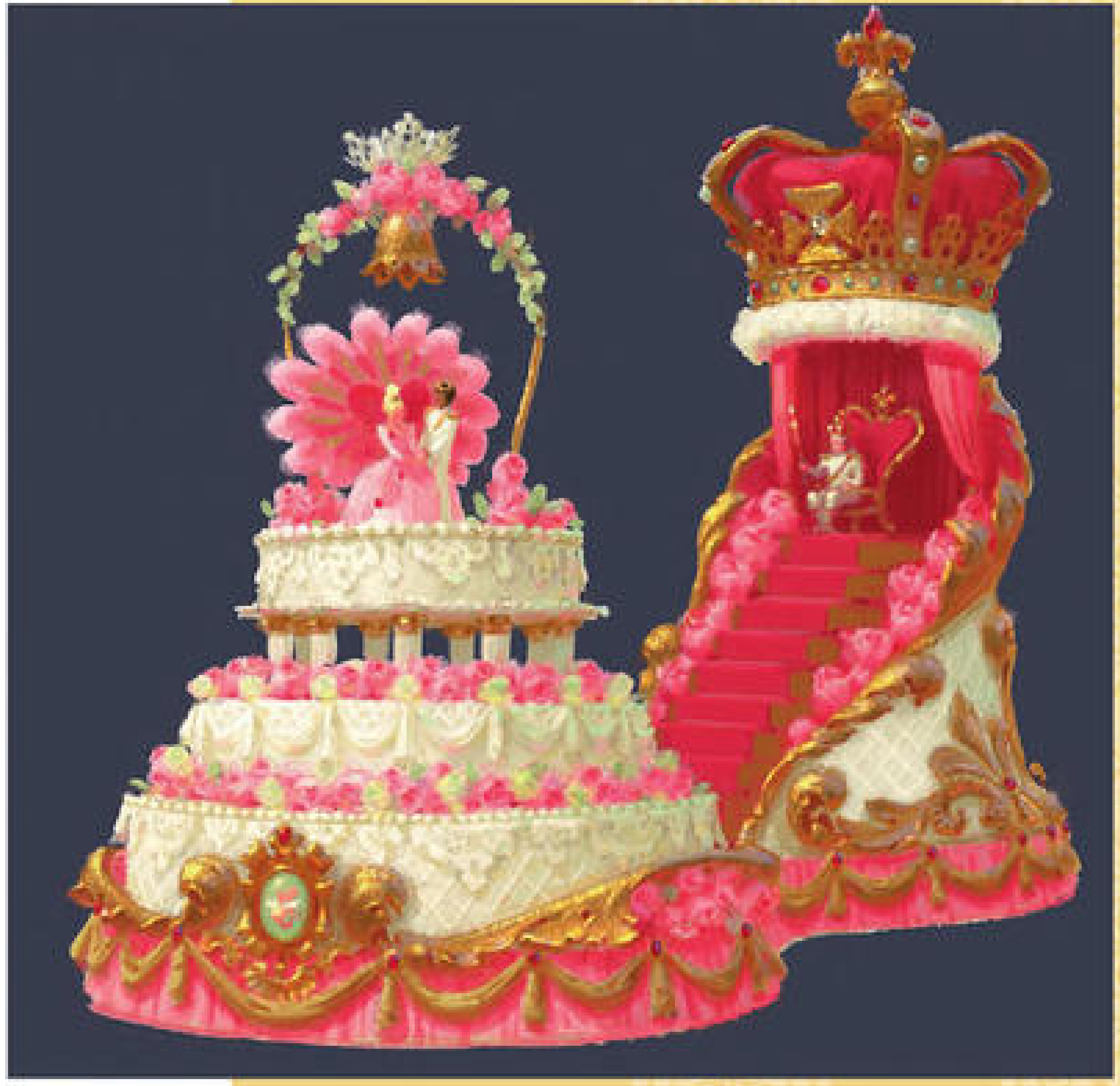
"I've been to Mardi Gras," West continues. "Tons of beads flashing in the air, man—tons of folks dressed every which way, a constant flutter of tons of confetti. That's a lot to do!"

Peter Del Vecho says, "We were able to bring almost our entire leadership down to New Orleans for Mardi Gras, but it was more than just the festivity of Mardi Gras."

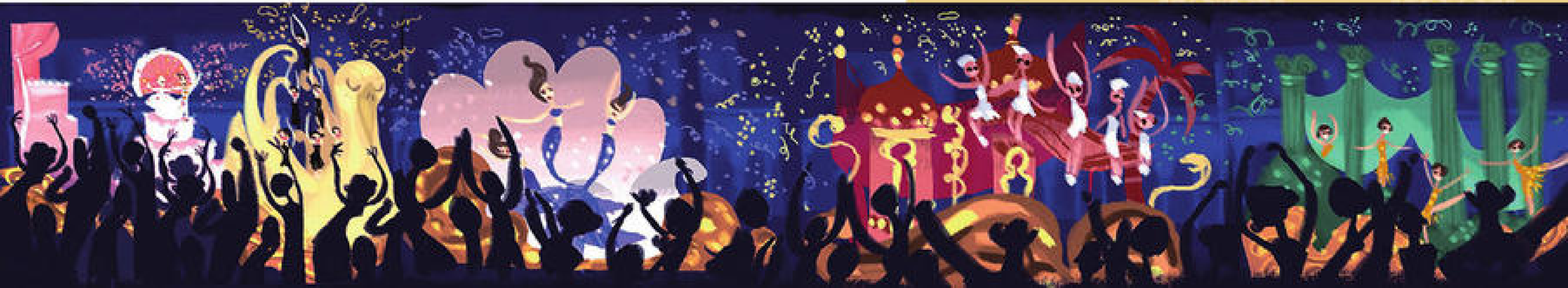
"We were on a float throwing beads, and it was a crazy experience," John Musker laughs. "It was a great inspiration."

Ron Clements continues, "We tried to keep that spirit of the city, and what we had all taken in from the people, and the eccentricities of it, in the characters and in the settings."

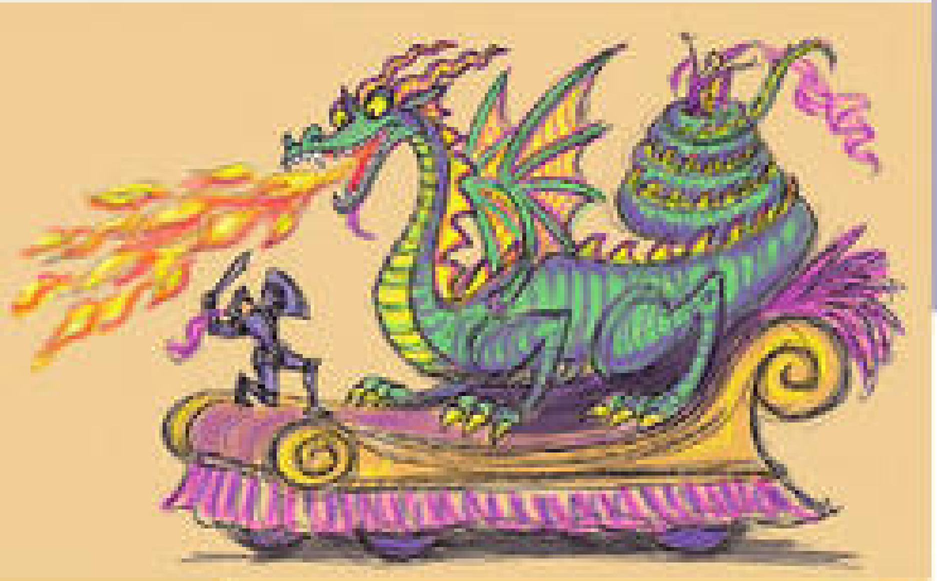
"It makes us want to capture the sounds, and color and light and heighten that feel in the movie," Del Vecho says, "to give an enhanced richness to that world."

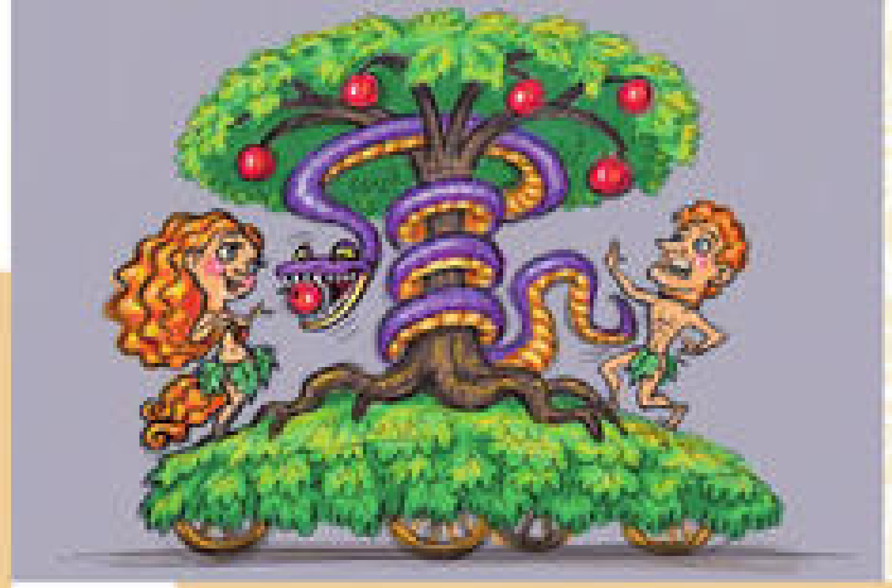


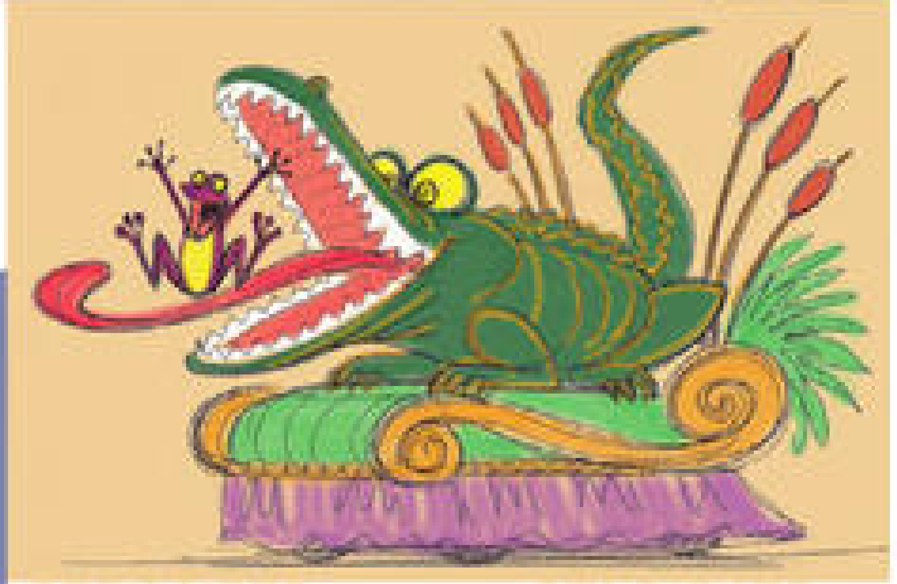
Ian Gooding | digital

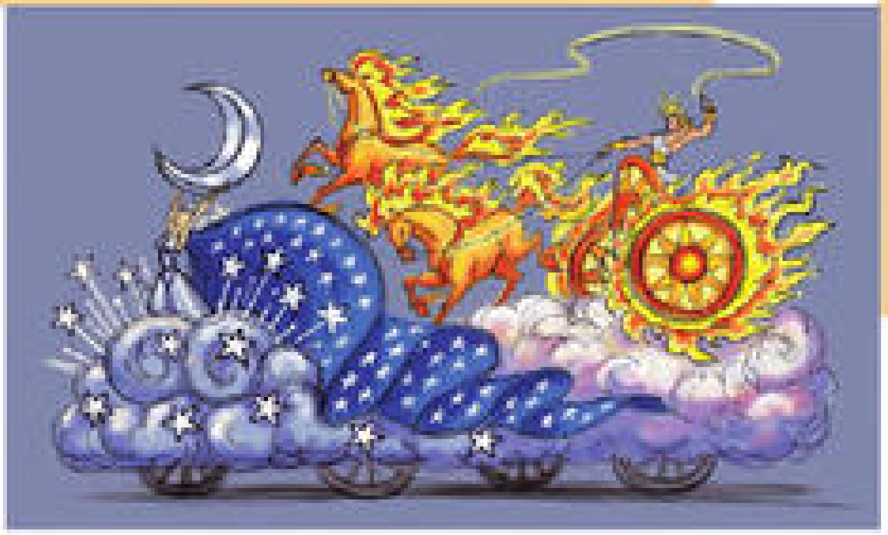


Lorelay Bove | digital



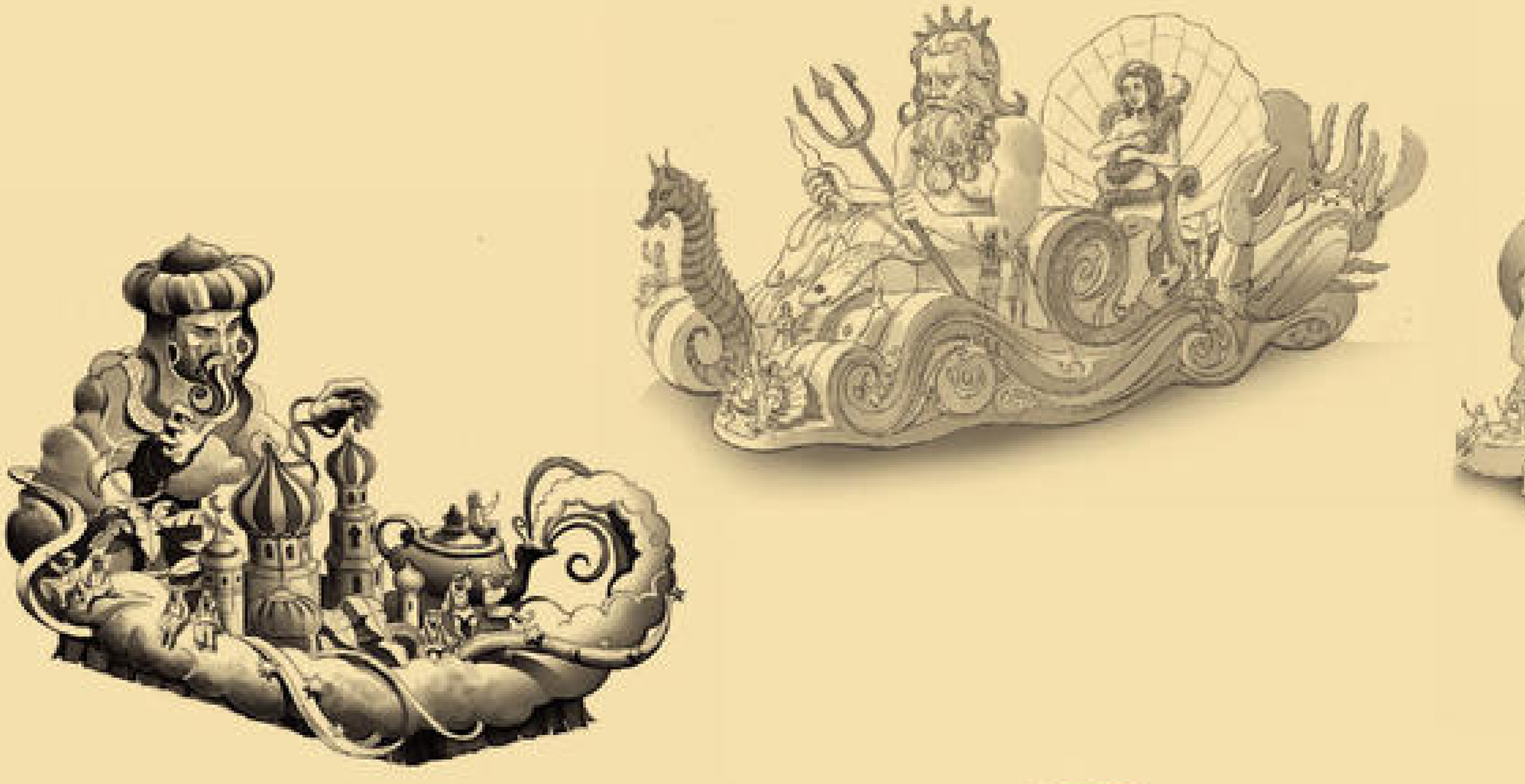




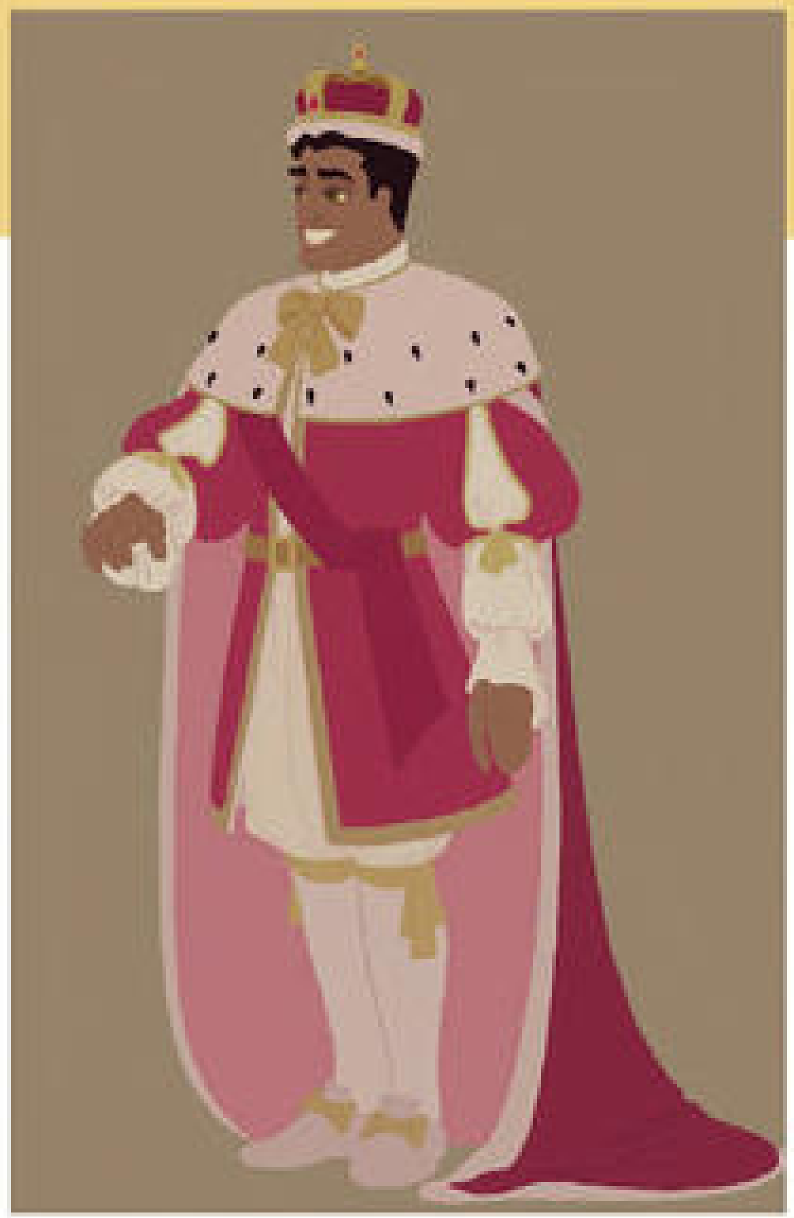


Kevin Gollaher | digital

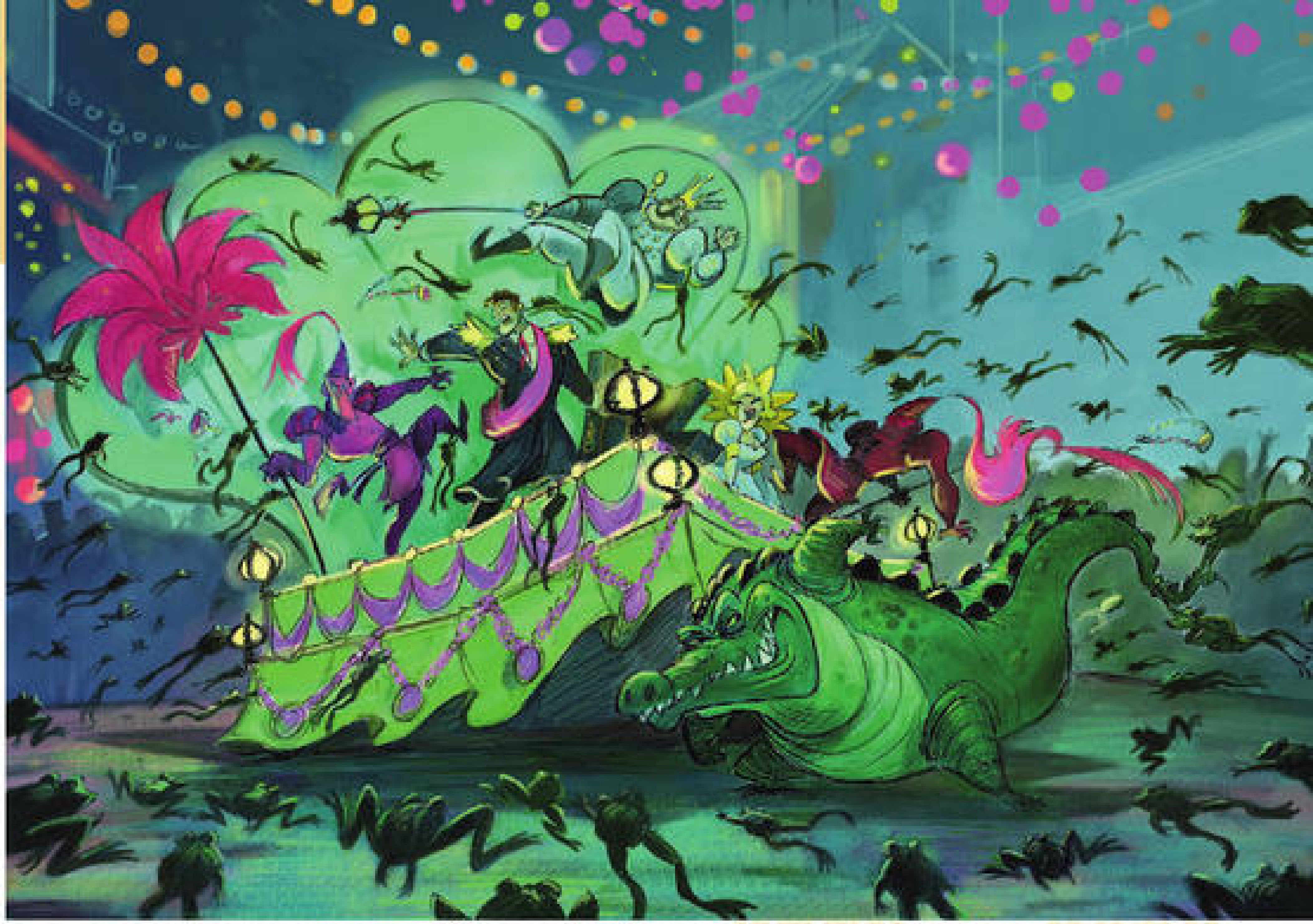
"At the beginning of the production, the leadership team went on an extended field trip to New Orleans during Mardi Gras. As the Supervising Editor on the film, I found this trip to be very rewarding. It was such a great opportunity to experience the city, its people, and its culture. And Mardi Gras had an unmatched energy and intensity. Witnessing all the music and all the sights and sounds first hand enabled me to instill some of that same energy and atmosphere into the pacing and feel of the final film."
—JEFF DRAHEIM, editor



Jim Martin | digital

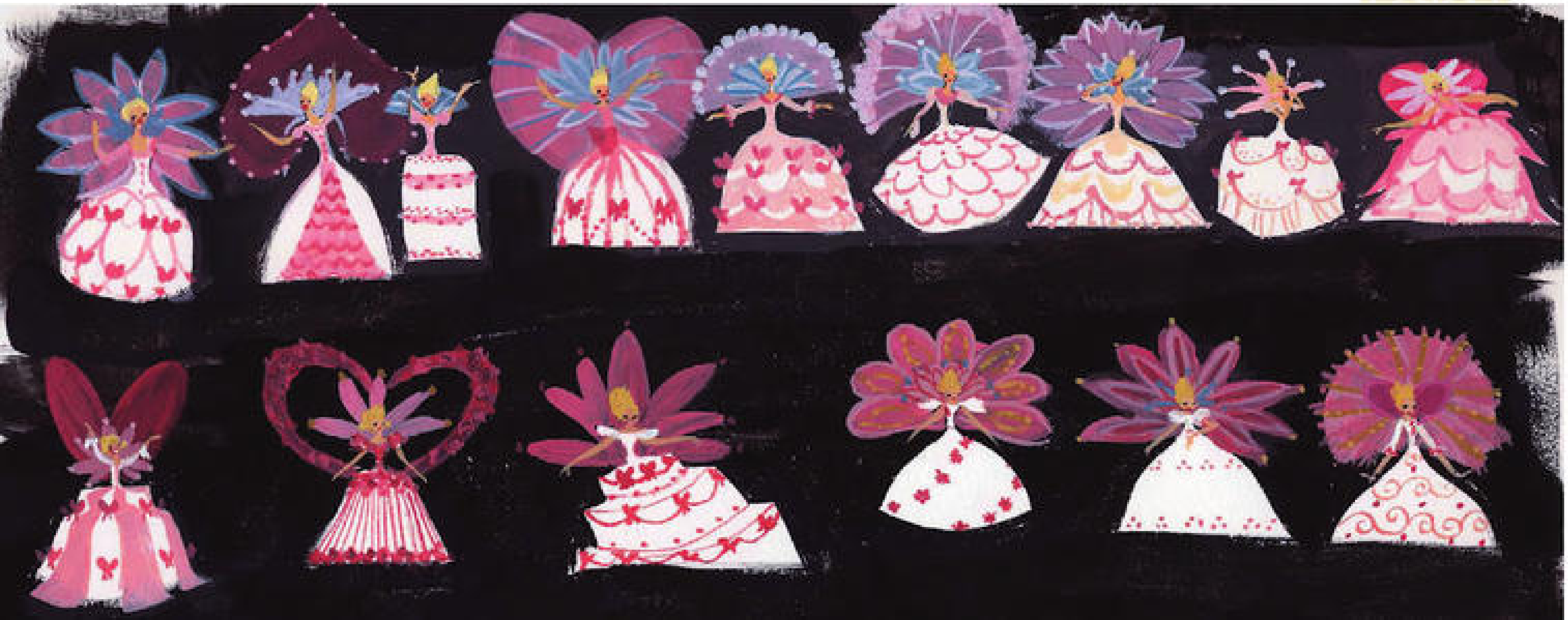


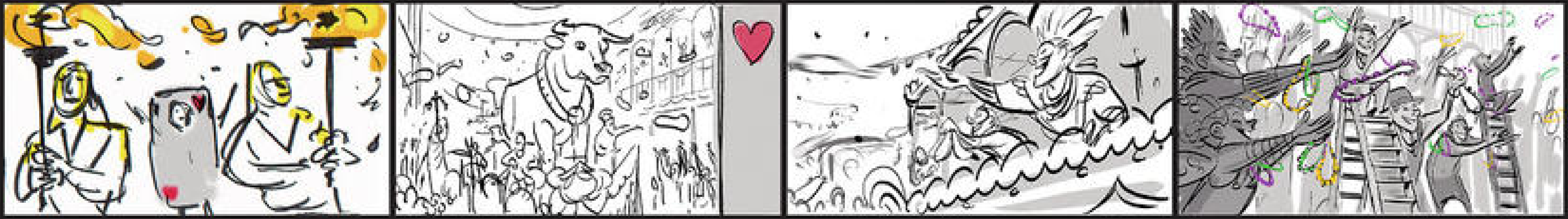
Ian Gooding | digital

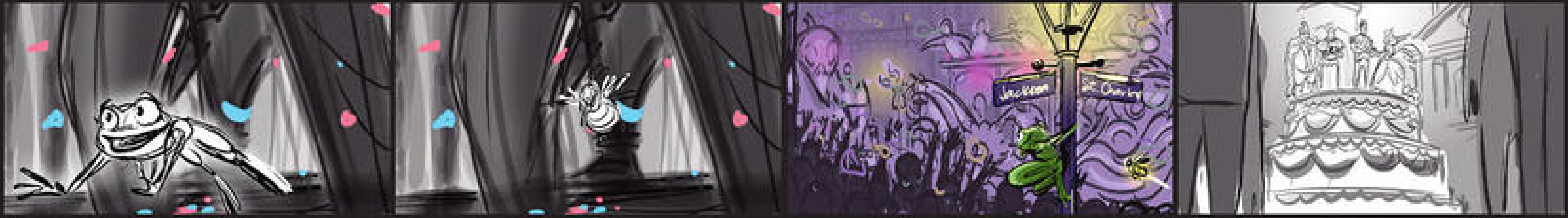


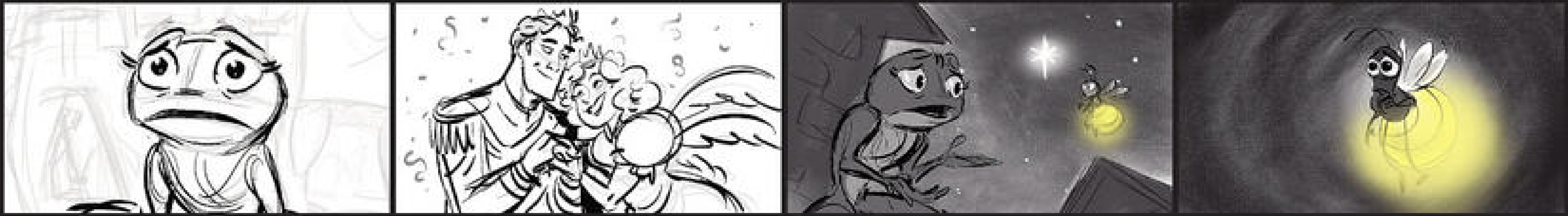
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

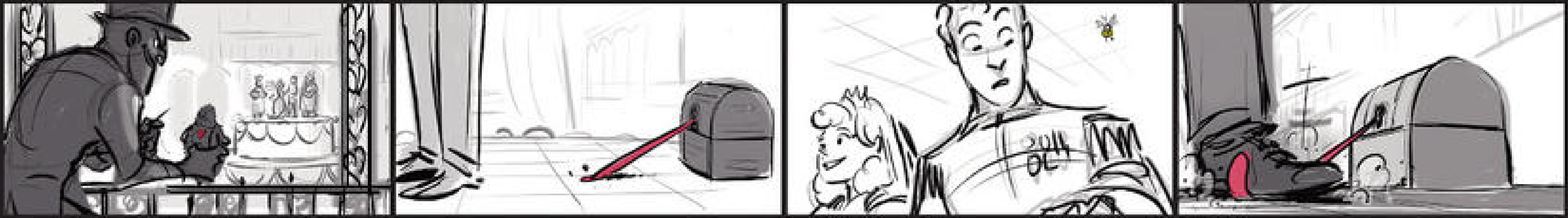
Lorelay Bove | gouache paint

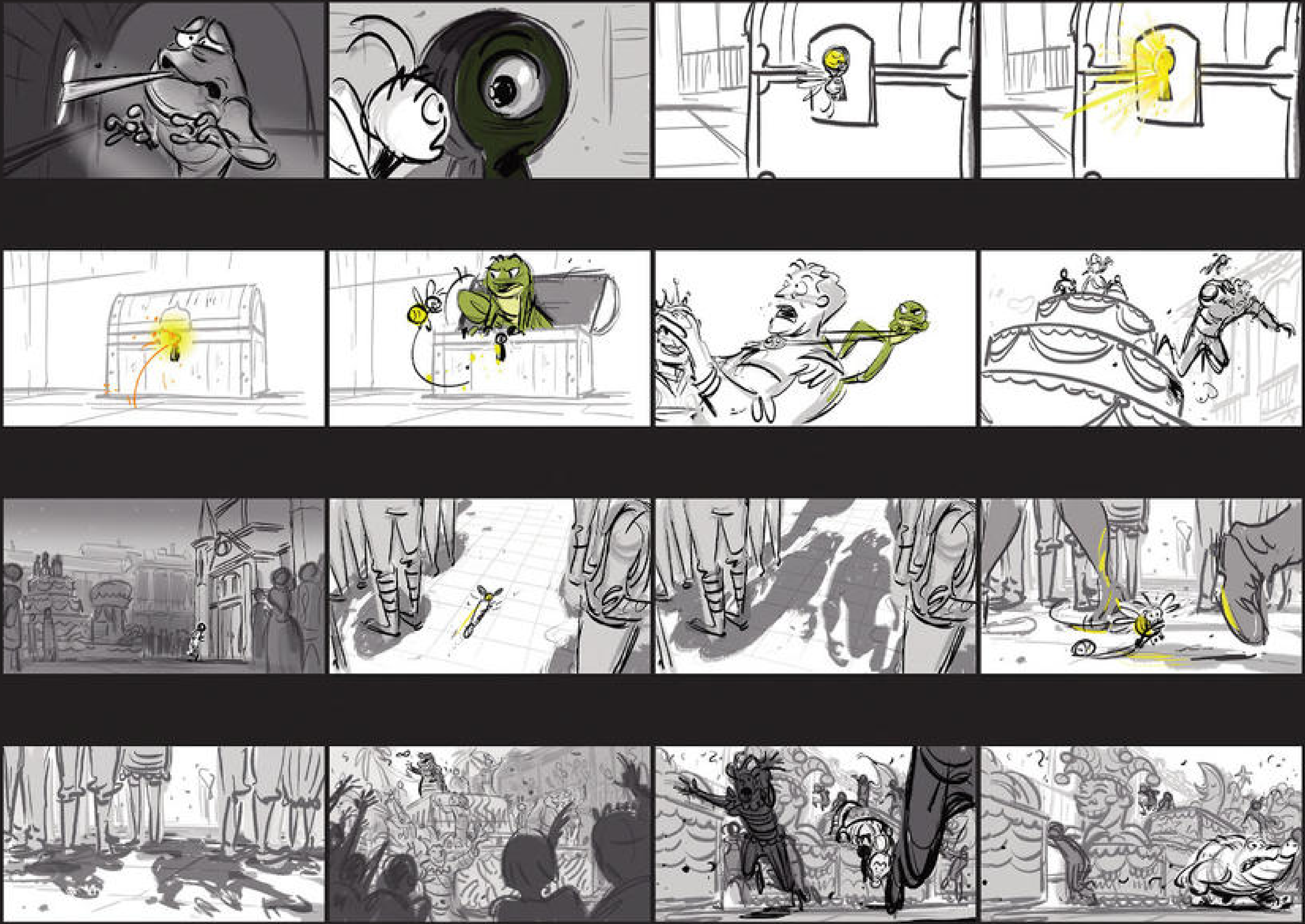




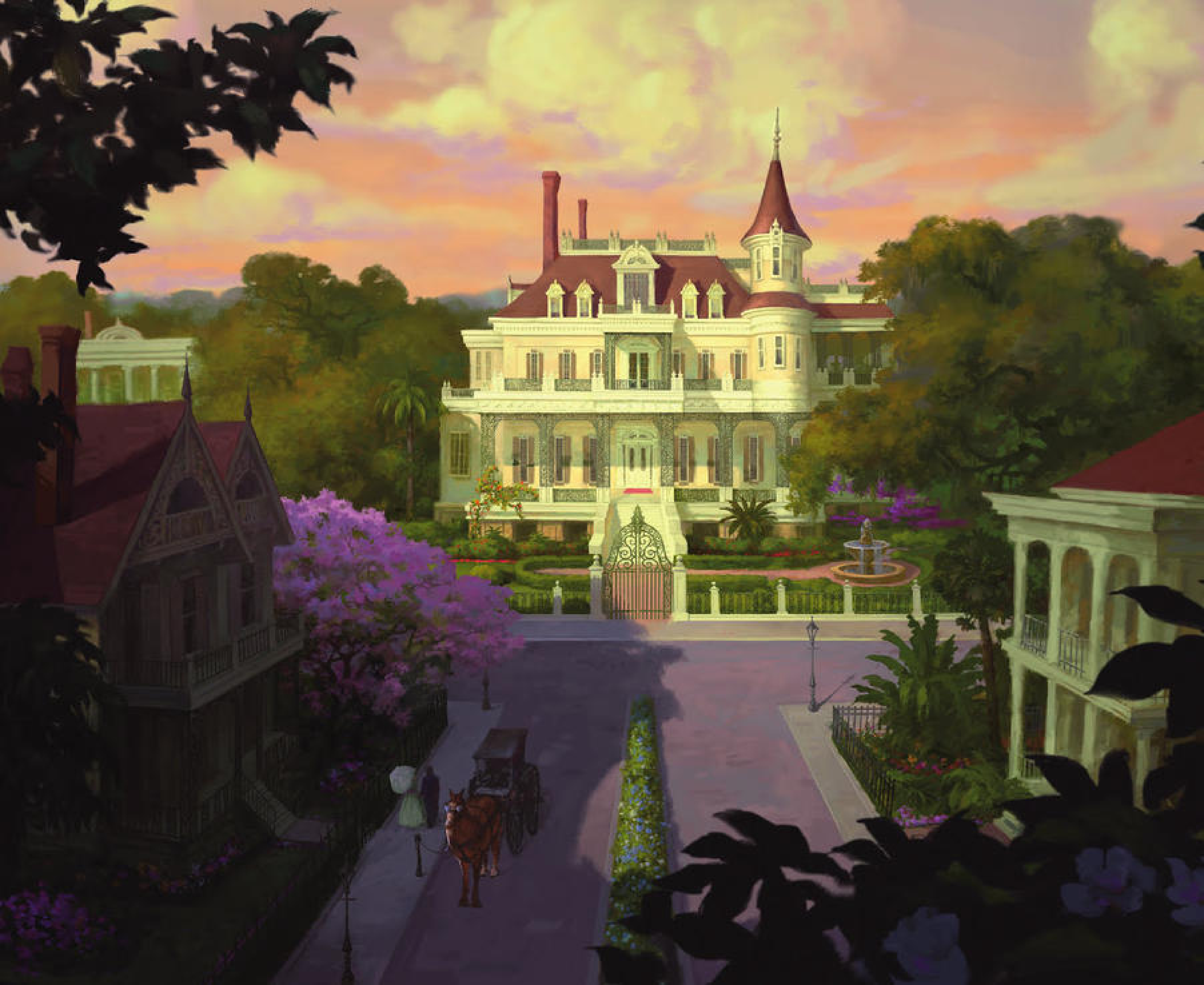

Jackson
St. Charles

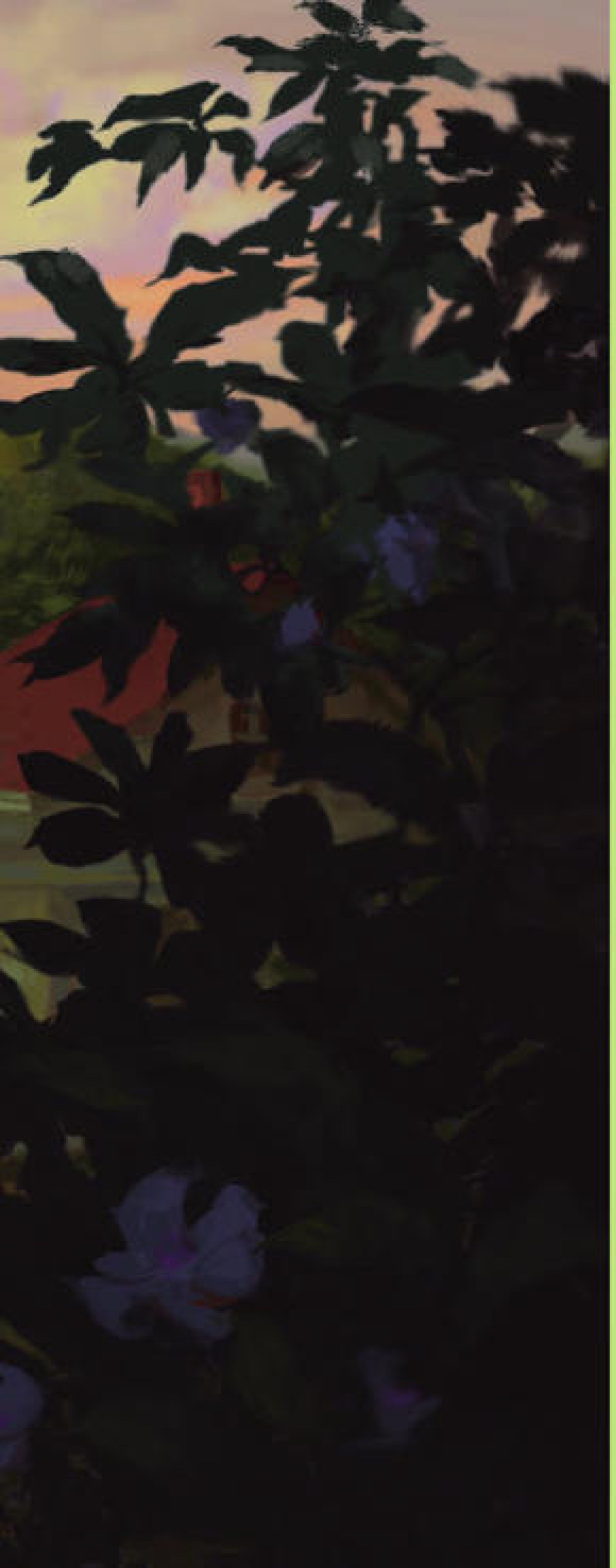






Storyboards | Paul Briggs | digital





CHAPTER TWO: THE GARDEN DISTRICT

"IN THE SOUTHLAND
THERE'S A CITY WAY DOWN
ON THE RIVER,
WHERE THE WOMEN
ARE VERY PRETTY,
AND ALL THE MEN DELIVER"

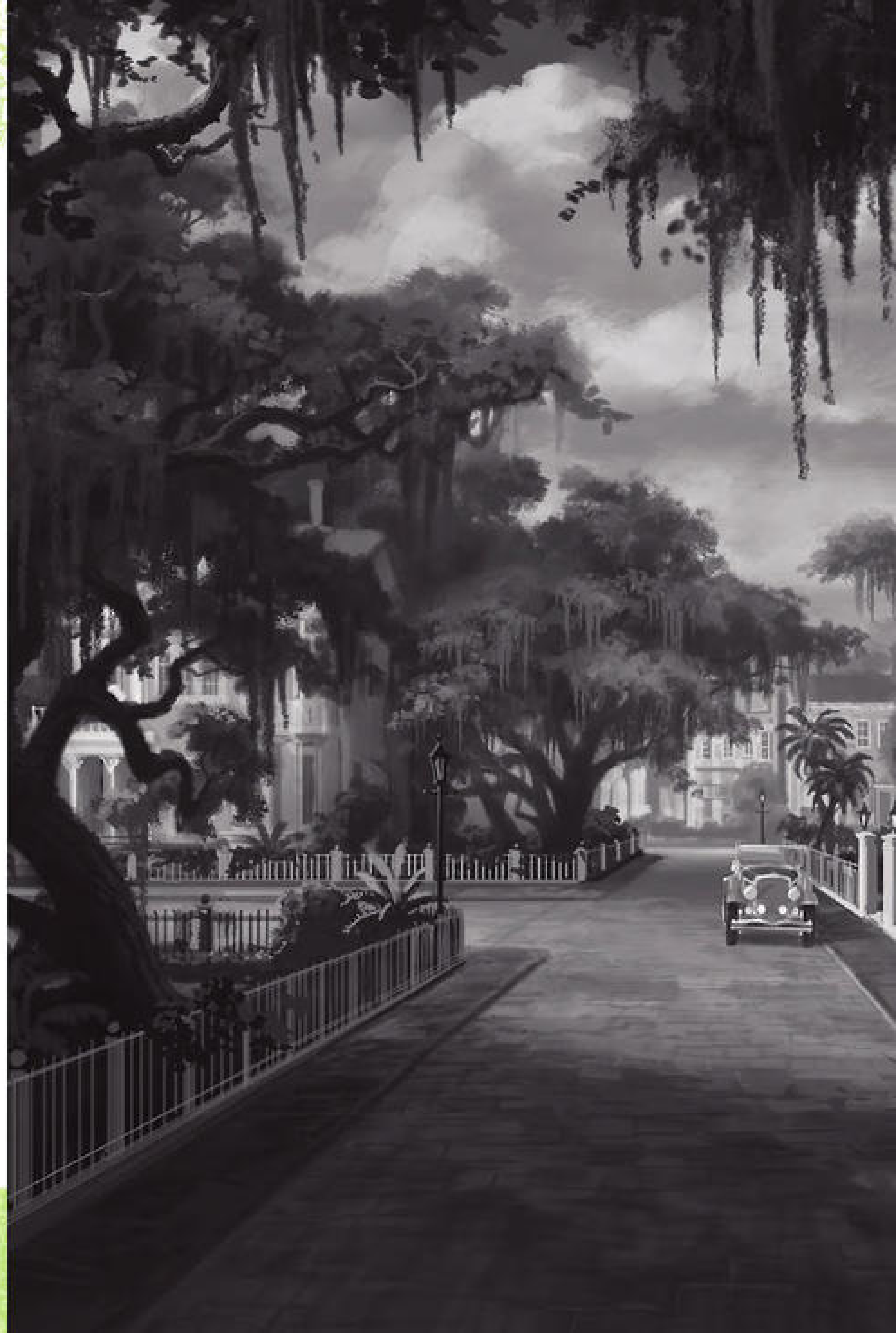
"Everybody's been tasked with making the world of the movie a real place, and making it clear at all times where in the world we are. We had to make sure that the buildings we were featuring have a relationship to all of our other locations. The audience is always having that reinforced for them: This is where in the world they are, and it's a very particular place."
—IAN GOODING, art director

Ian Gooding | digital

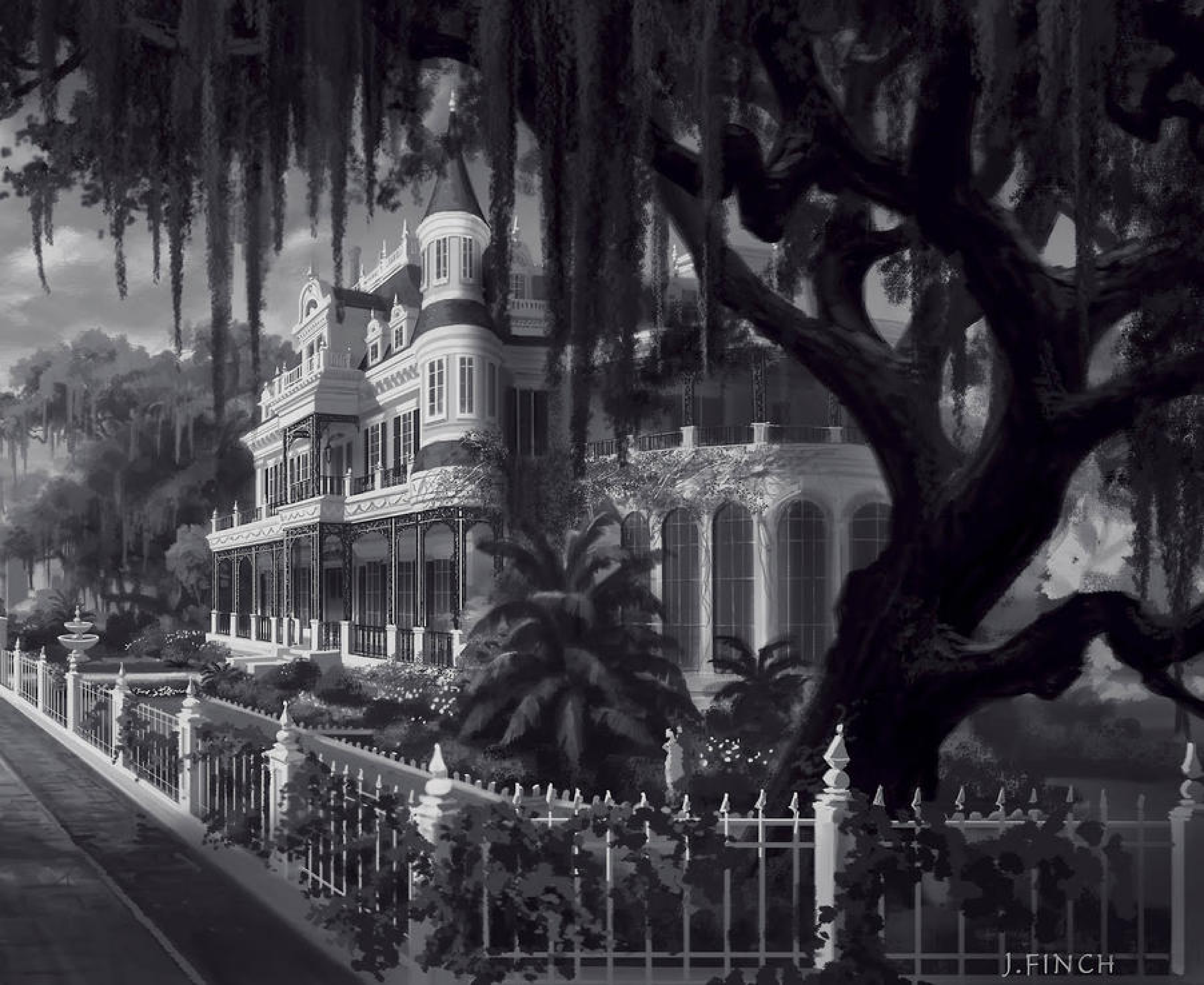
CULTIVATING THE GARDEN DISTRICT

As the residential setting for the ostensible "royal family" in this American fairy tale, the filmmakers desired a locale that evoked, within its New Orleans setting, the ideas of luxury, solidity, and tradition that are embodied within the classic story imagery as the stout walls of a majestic castle.

They found it south of St. Charles Avenue, west of First Street, north of Magazine Street, and east of Toledano Street: the Garden District, the first suburban neighborhood of the city of New Orleans. Originally developed from 1832 to about 1900, the Garden District (laid out by famed New Orleans architect, planner, surveyor—and ultimately, pirate—Barthelemy Lafon) tells a story of wealthy newcomers building opulent homes reflecting their prosperity—and that of New Orleans in that era.

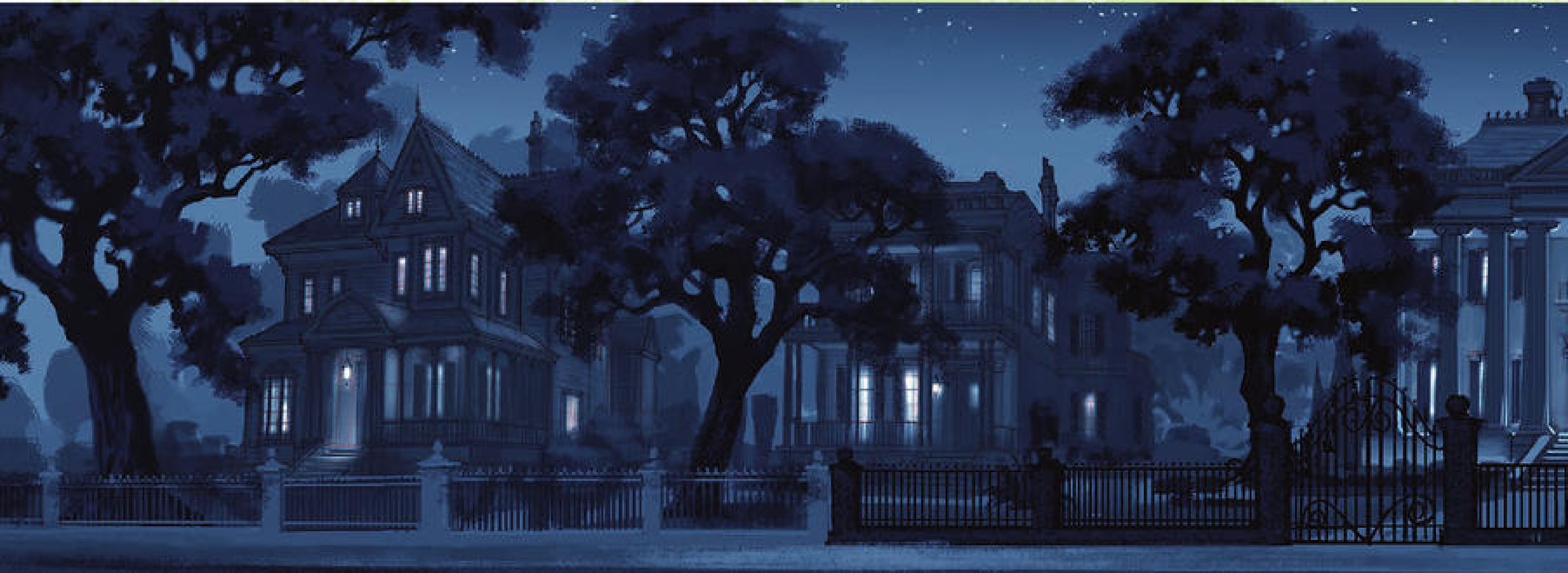


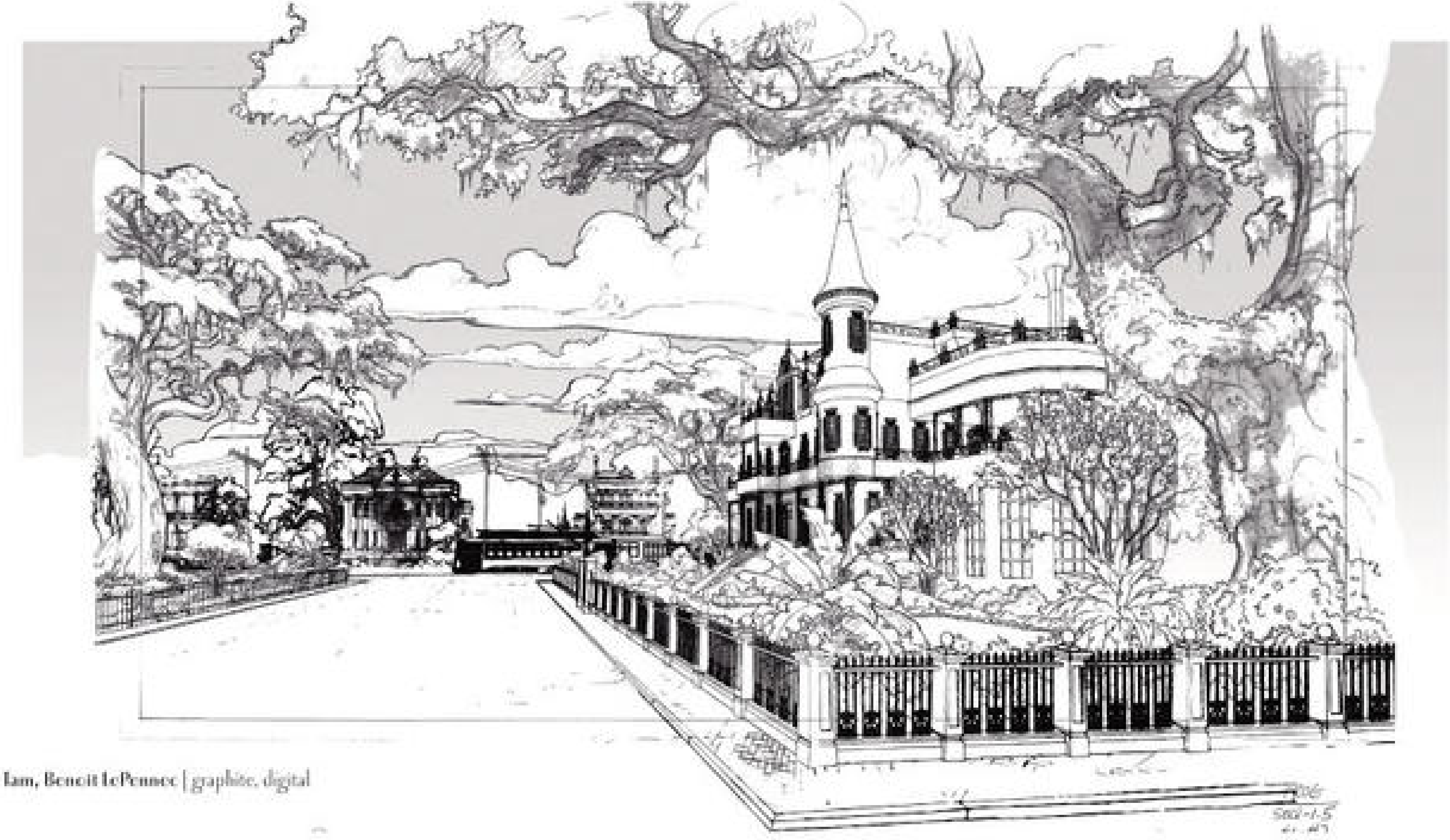
James Aaron Finch | digital


J.FINCH

STATELY HOMES AND MANSIONS OF THE SUGAR BARONS AND COTTON KINGS

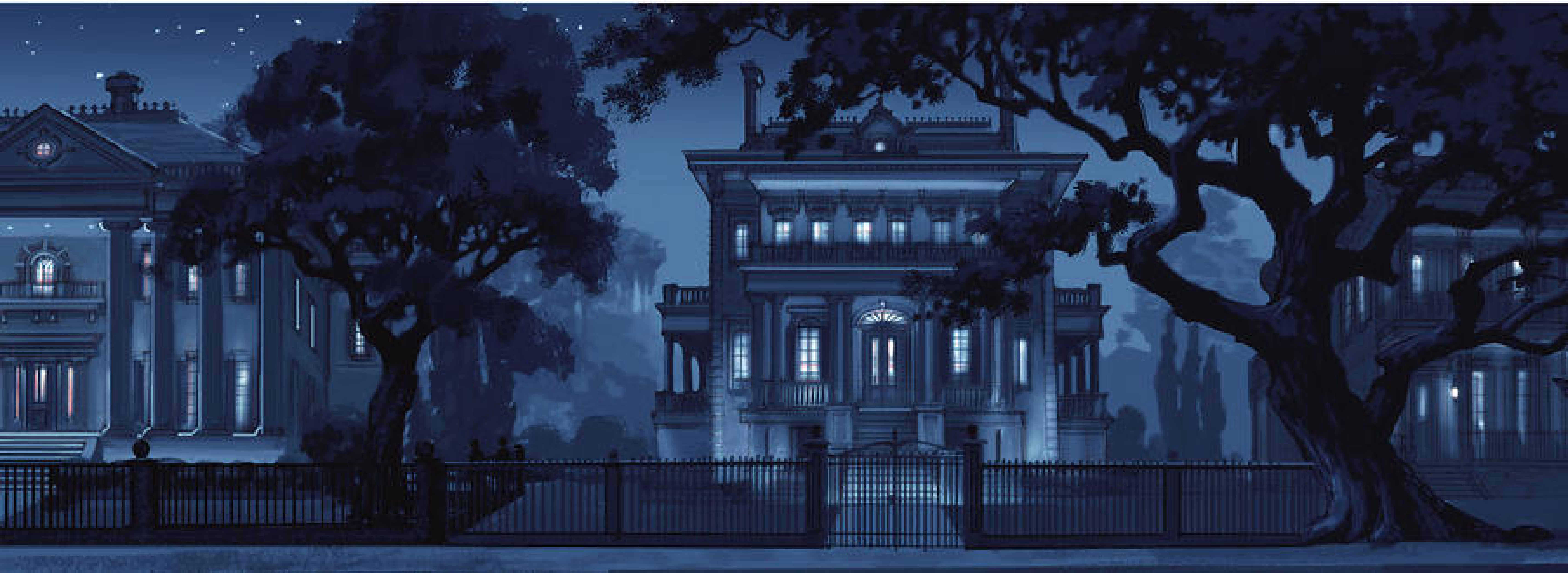
Originally the Garden District was developed across the boundaries of five estates (Soulet, LaCourse, Annunciation, Nuns, and Panis) with ornate mansions, each surrounded by a large garden, giving the district its name. In the late 19th century, several of these huge lots were subdivided, creating a pattern of more sedate early 19th-century mansions side by side with the fanciful "gingerbread" of late Victorian houses, and resulting in a "Garden District," now better known for its architecture than its gardens. In fact, it may be one of the best-preserved collections of historic Southern mansions in the United States.





Allen Tam, Benoit LePennec | graphite, digital

James Aaron Finch | digital

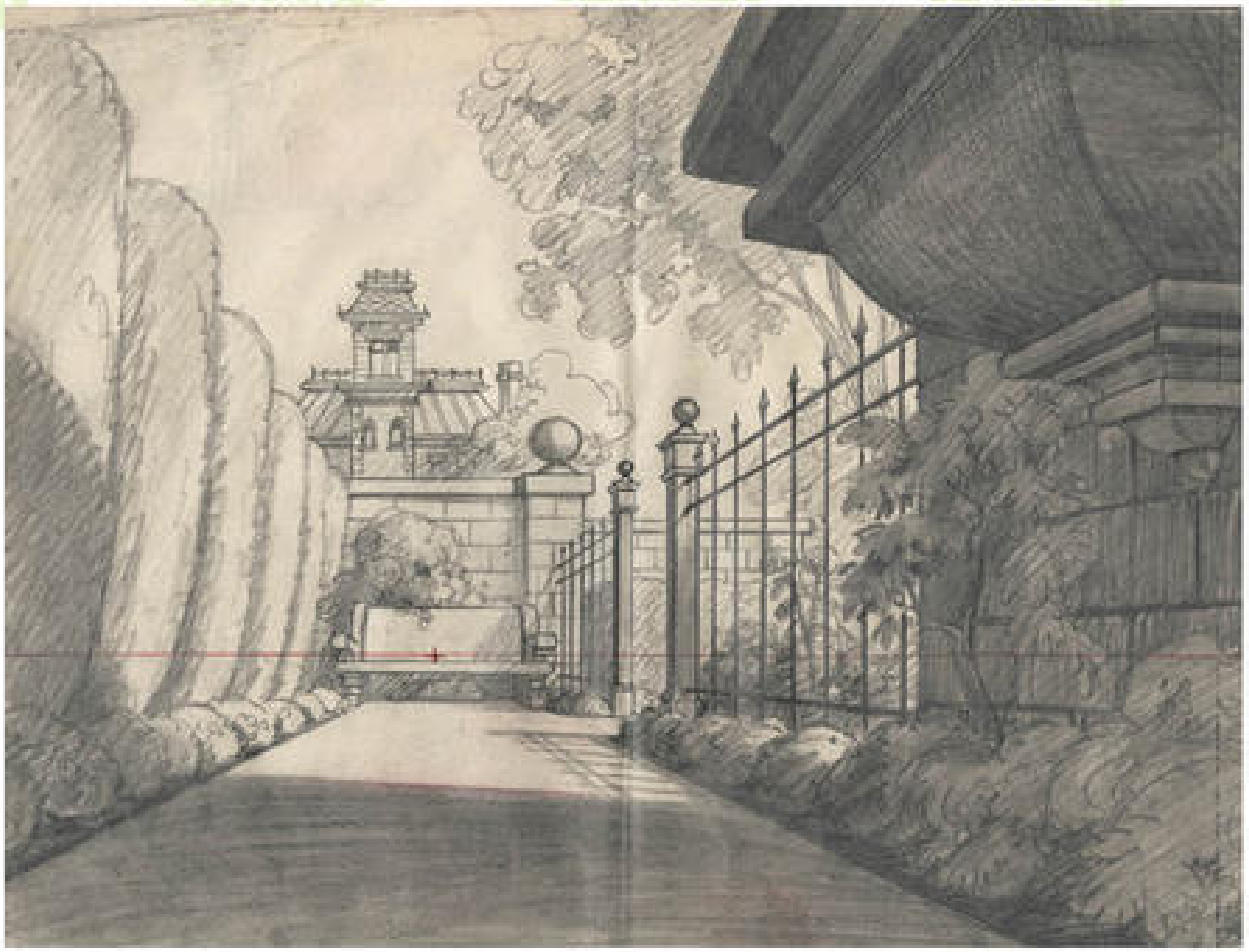


DESIGN INSPIRATIONS

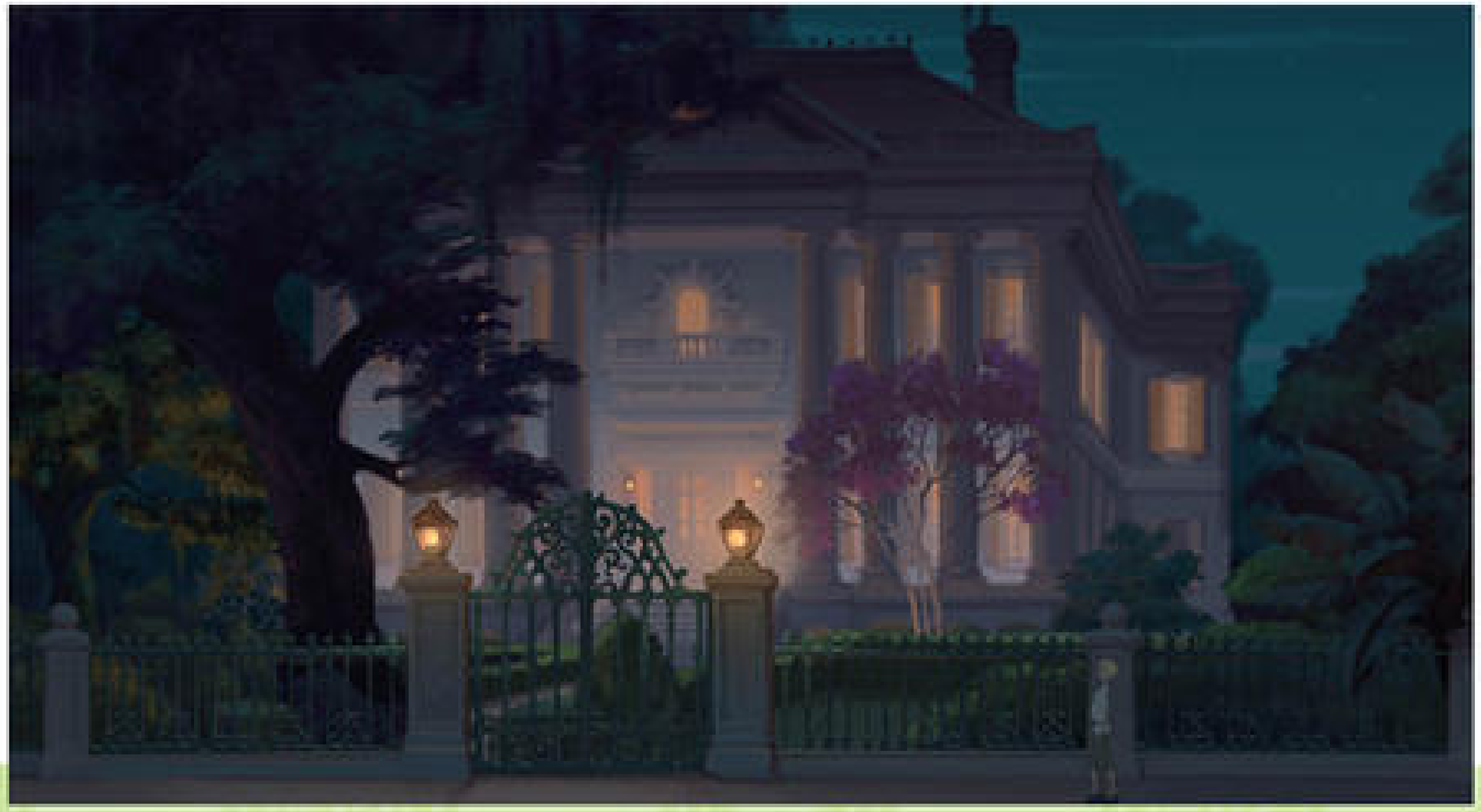
In approaching the design of the Garden District, the filmmakers faced the challenge of taking a very ordered, architectural real-world inspiration and making it into a lush and nostalgic fairy-tale realm. Additionally, the "human" environs had to seamlessly coexist with the extreme naturalism of the bayou that also plays such an important role.

Art director Ian Gooding looked to Disney's 1954 release Lady and the Tramp for inspiration and guidance. "They took something incredibly complex and painted only what was important. You can do that with a town; you can say, 'Well, the characters don't interact with these things on the buildings so we can actually soften them a nd lose a fair amount of detail.'"

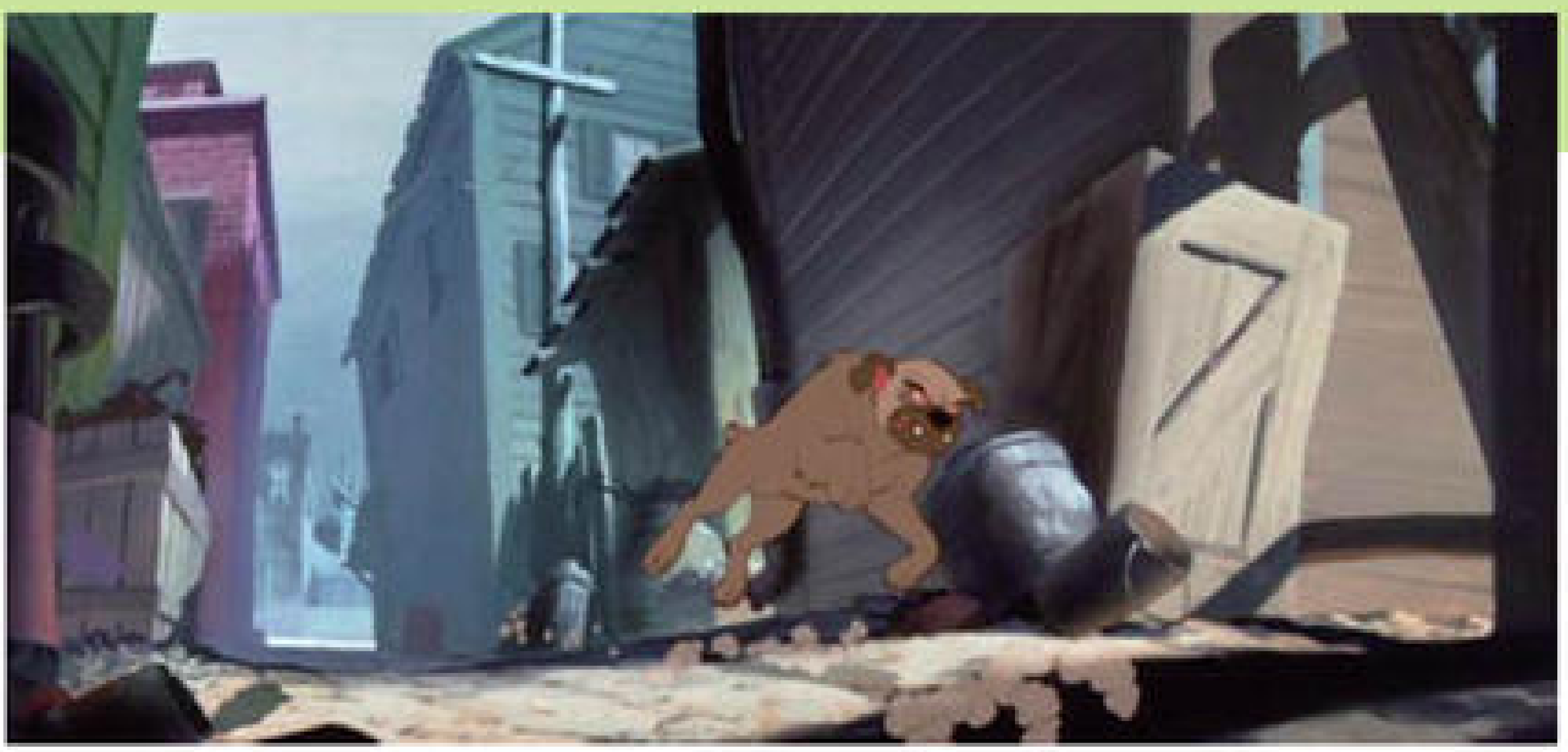
This "softening" also heightened a degree of caricature to the to the design, in order to relieve the innate rigidity of the horizontal/vertical statements of real buildings. Ornamentation, turnings, scrollwork, and posts were exaggerated without compromising the structural solidity of the buildings. Verticals were not always drawn parallel, but tilting side to side. This tilting actually ended up appearing balanced in the composition of the final shot. Older buildings in particular were gives a more pronounced tilt or bow on the vertical; they have more curved lines and appear concave in overall shape. The result was caricatured, but solidly constructed, architecture.



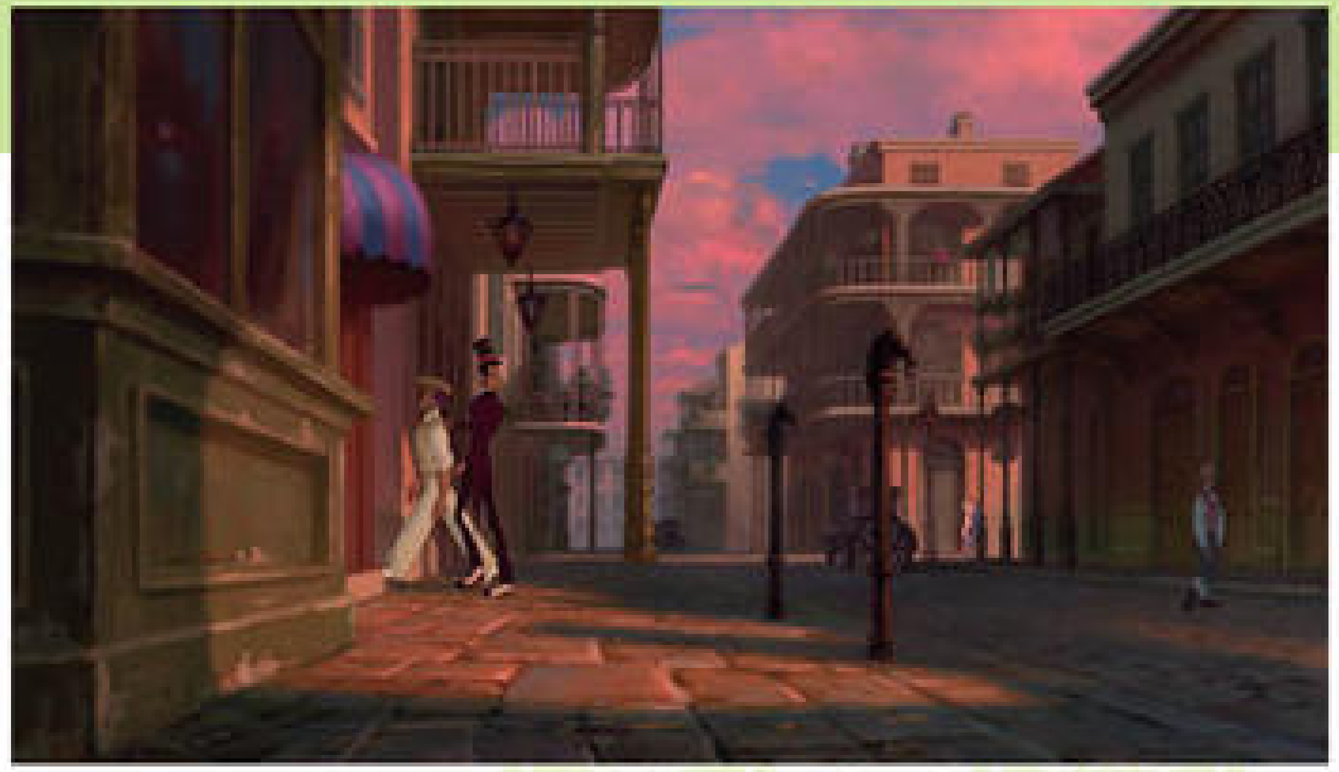
Layout from Lady and Tramp (1954)



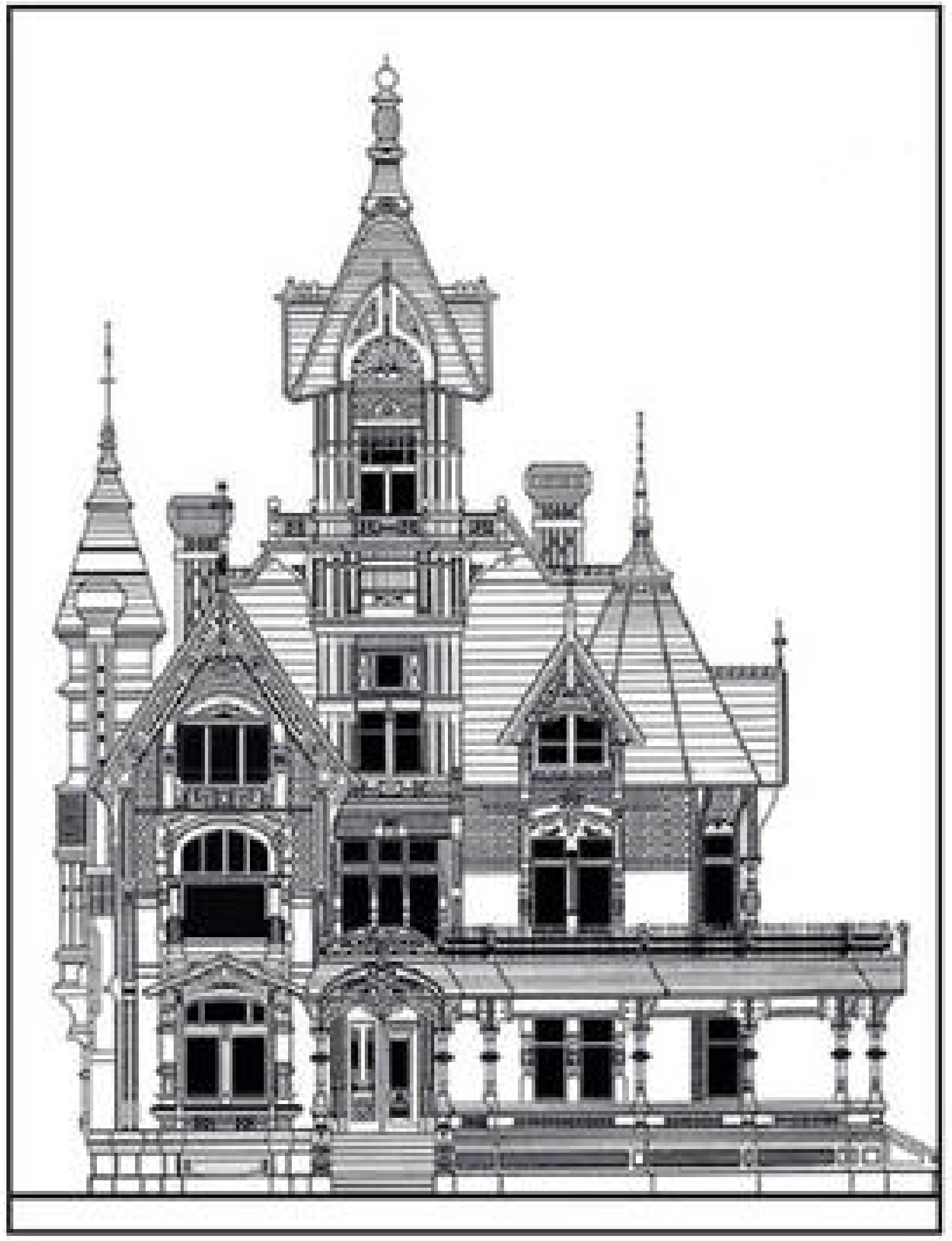
Garden District| final film frame | digital



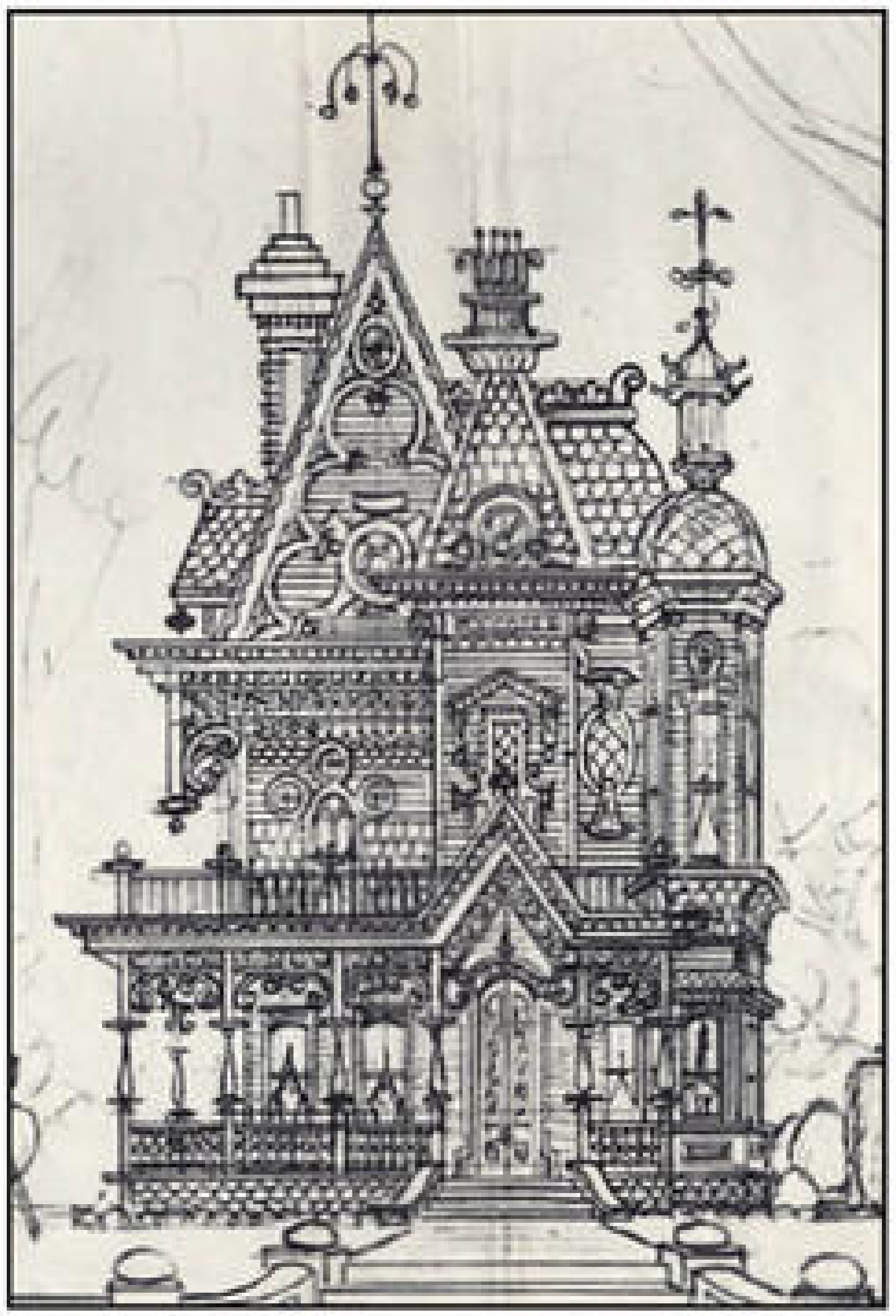
Lady and the Tramp background shows the balanced tilting of elements. Bowing and concave forms in the buildings are clearly visible



French Quarter|final film frame | digital



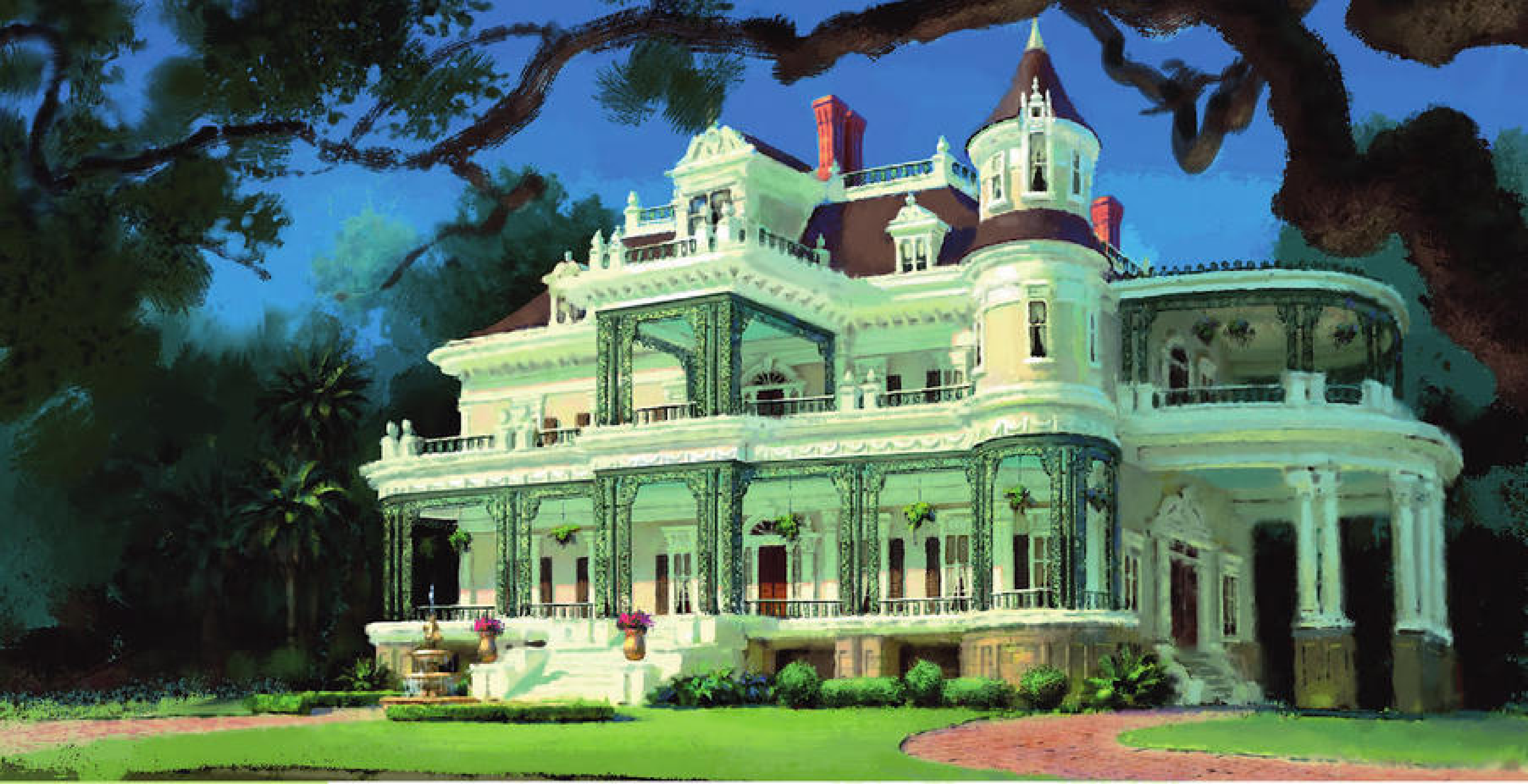
Real Victorian house plan with real-world scale details



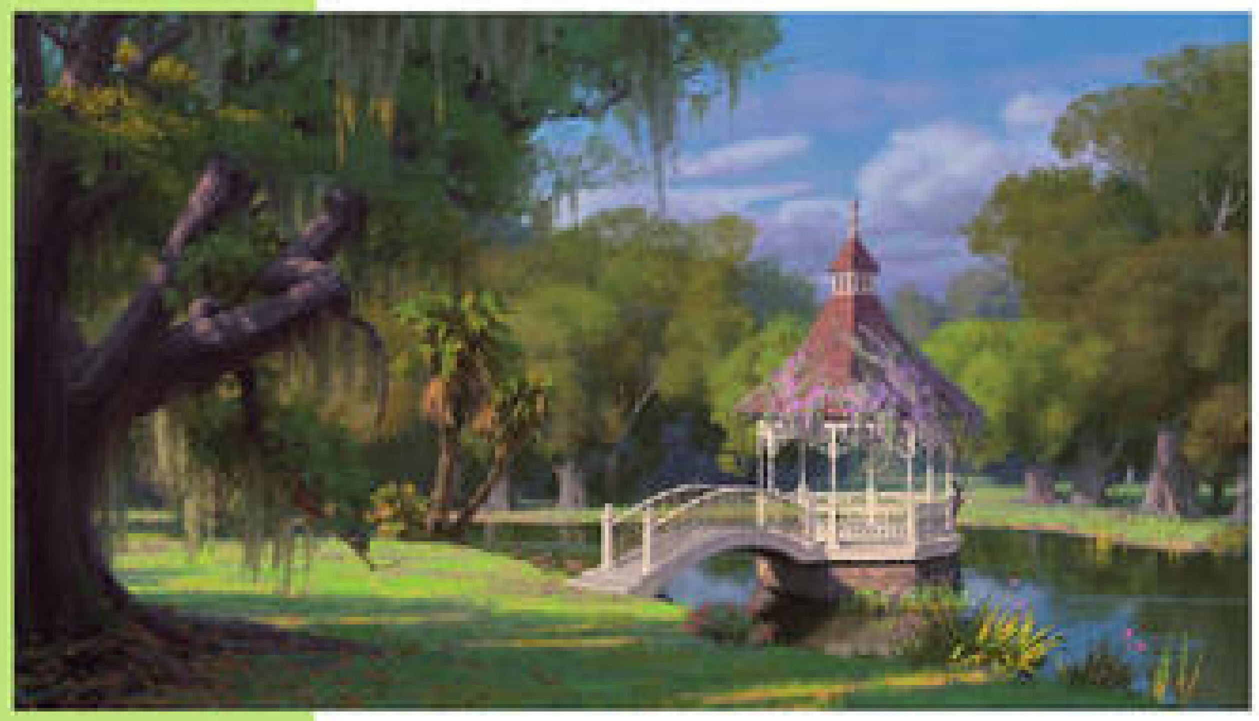
Lady and the Tramp layout with exaggerated size details

"We knew we were working on a period piece and we knew that some of the architecture was of that Garden District and French Quarter feel, so we looked at Lady and the Tramp not so much for the 'application of paint,' but definitely the of shapes, and the compositional elements. Large foreground elements utilizing the screen shape, and then space of depth, and pattern, and a nice balance and rhythm of light shapes."

—James Aaron Finch, production designer



Ian Gooding | digital

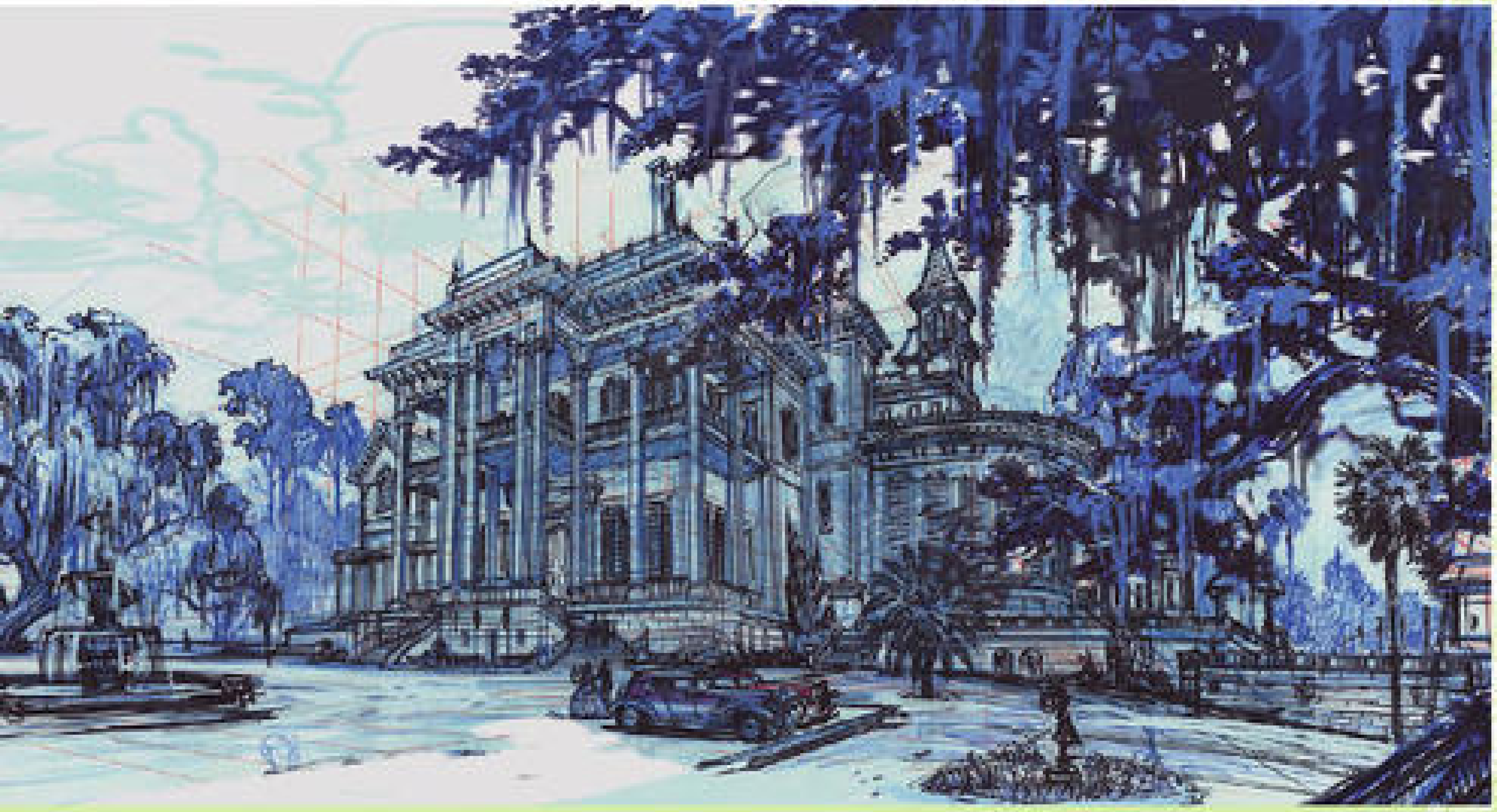


Sai Ping Lok | digital

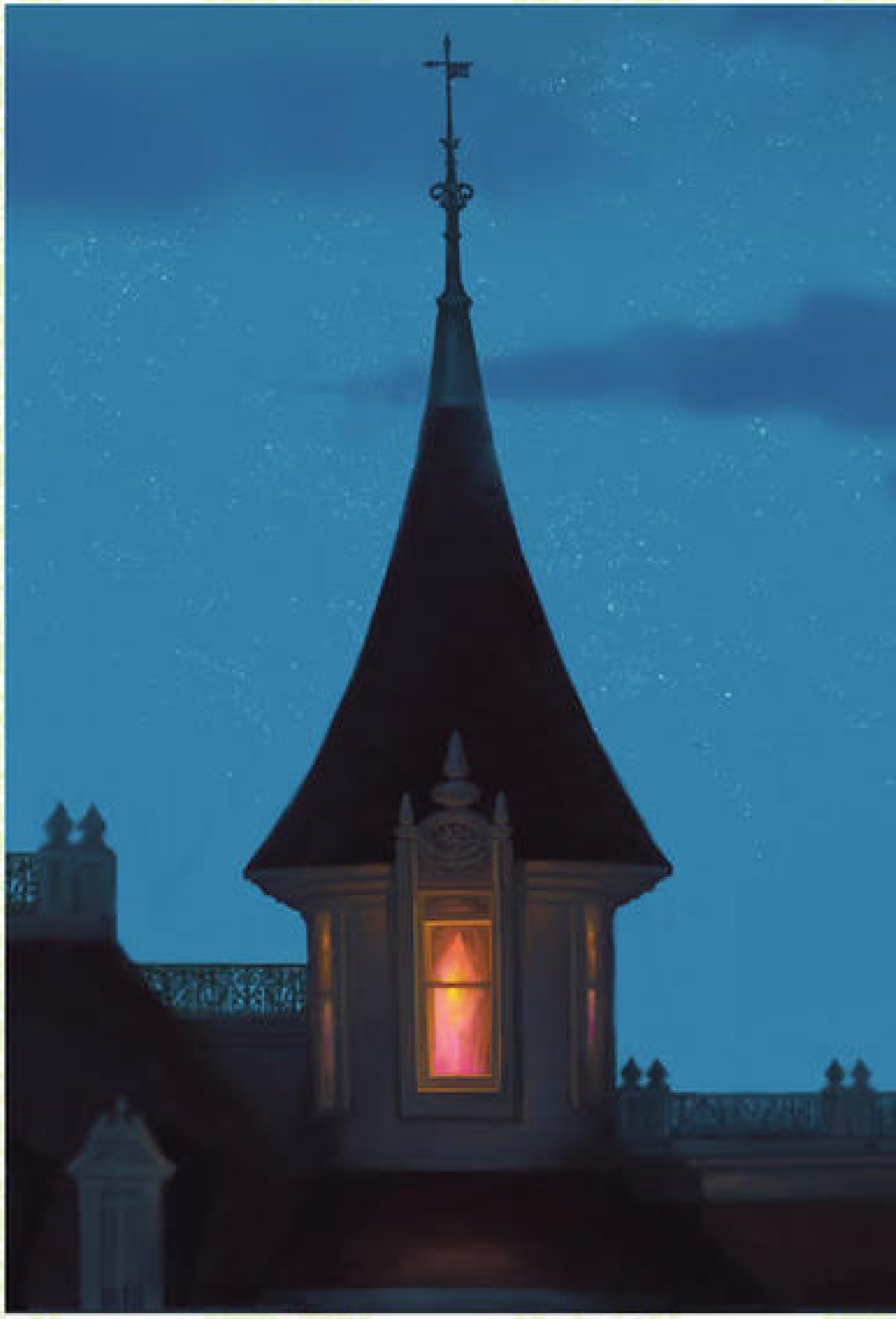
"Since we are transposing the notion of a fairy tale into an American historical setting, there was a desire to create the feel of a castle and a royal court."
—Peter Del Vecho, producer

THE
LA BOUFF ESTATE

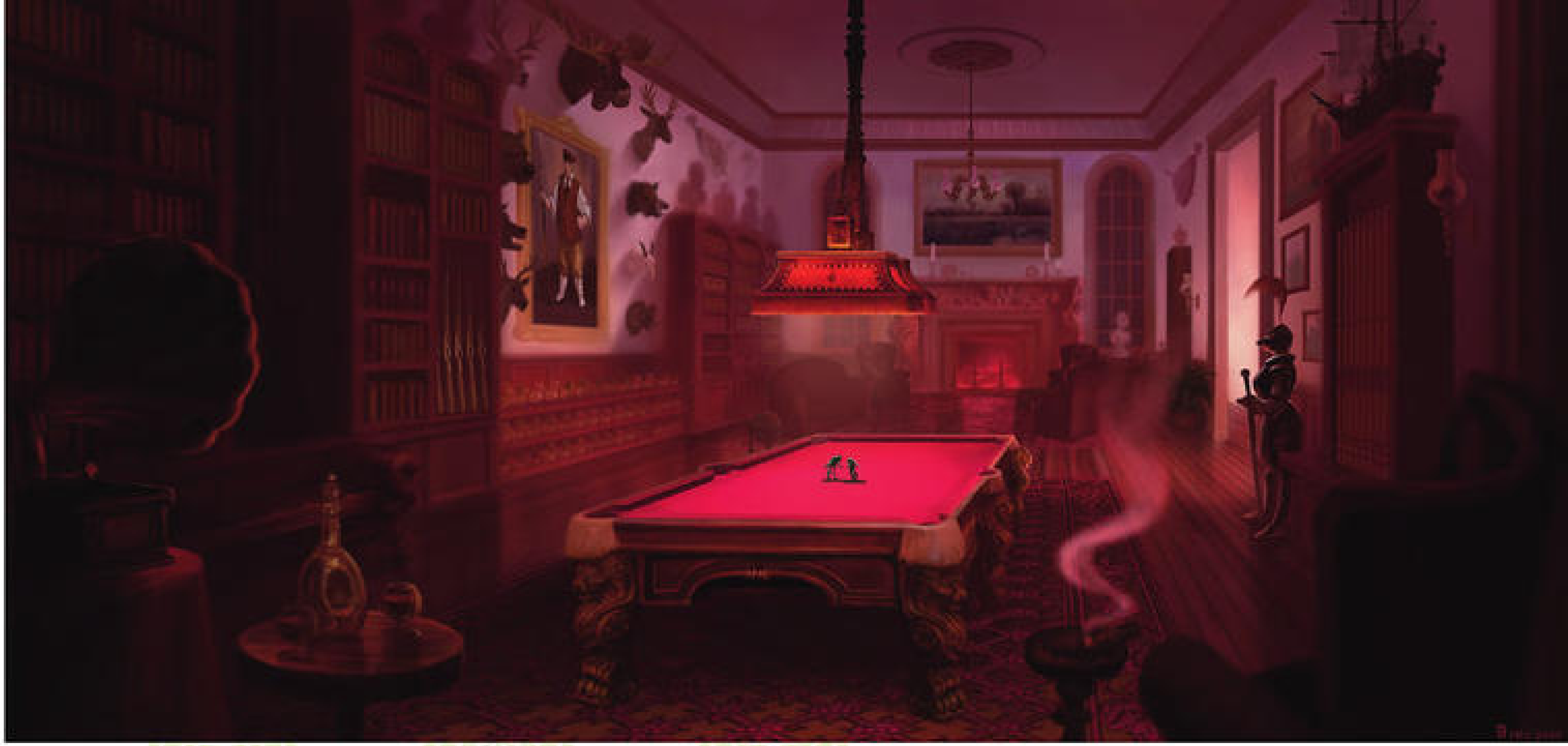
Nestled among the towering live oaks and colorful flora of the Garden District is the grandest house of all, an elegant filigreed wedding cake of stature and symmetry. This is the graceful but imposing residence of Eli "Big Daddy" La Bouff, scion of the film's royal family.



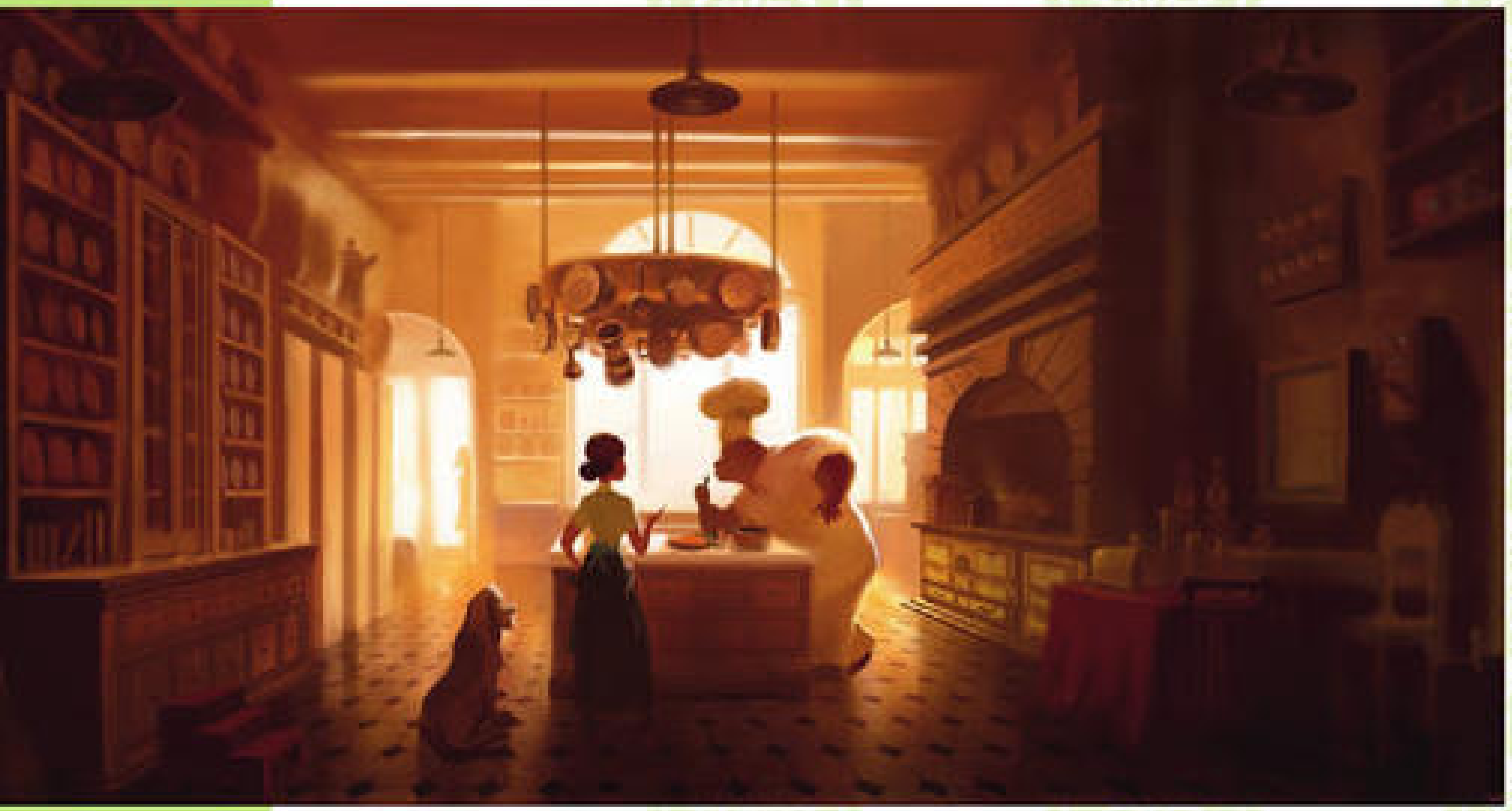
James Aaron Finch | ink pen



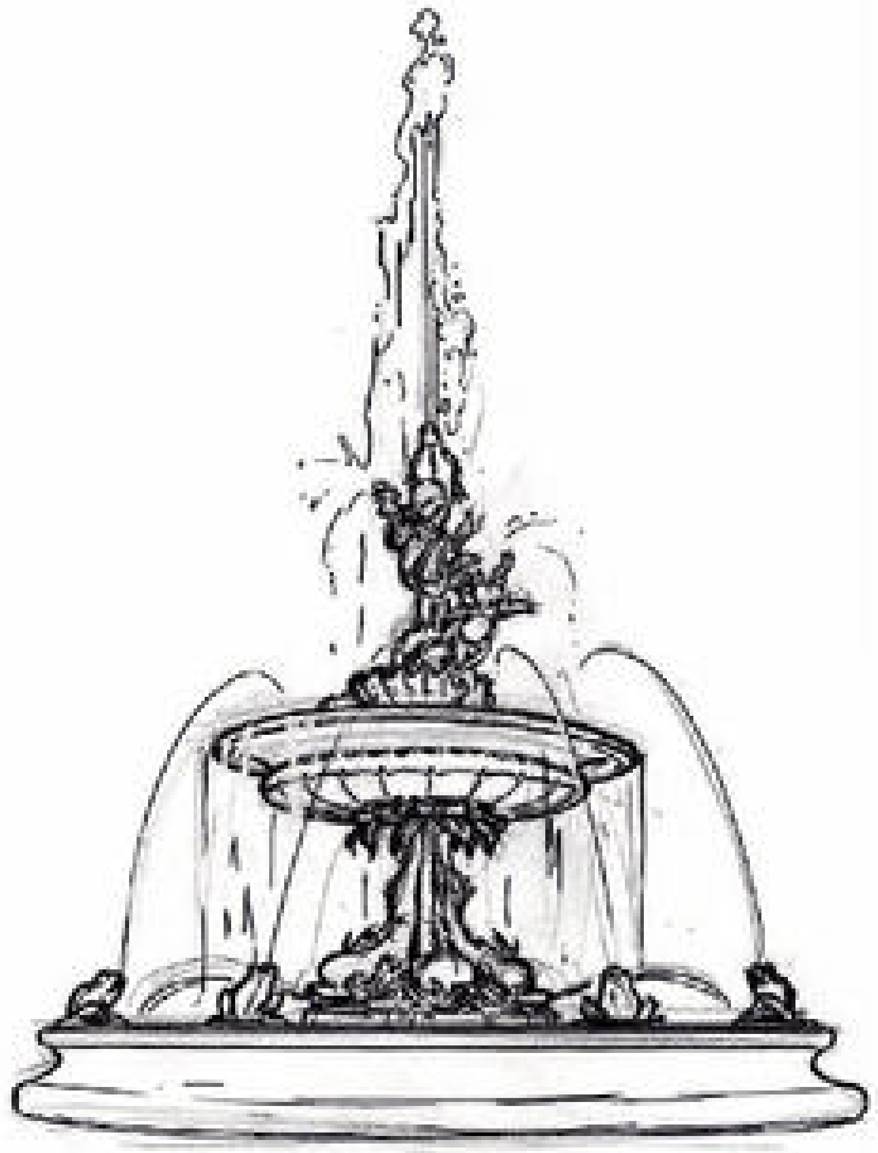
Sunny Apinchapong | digital



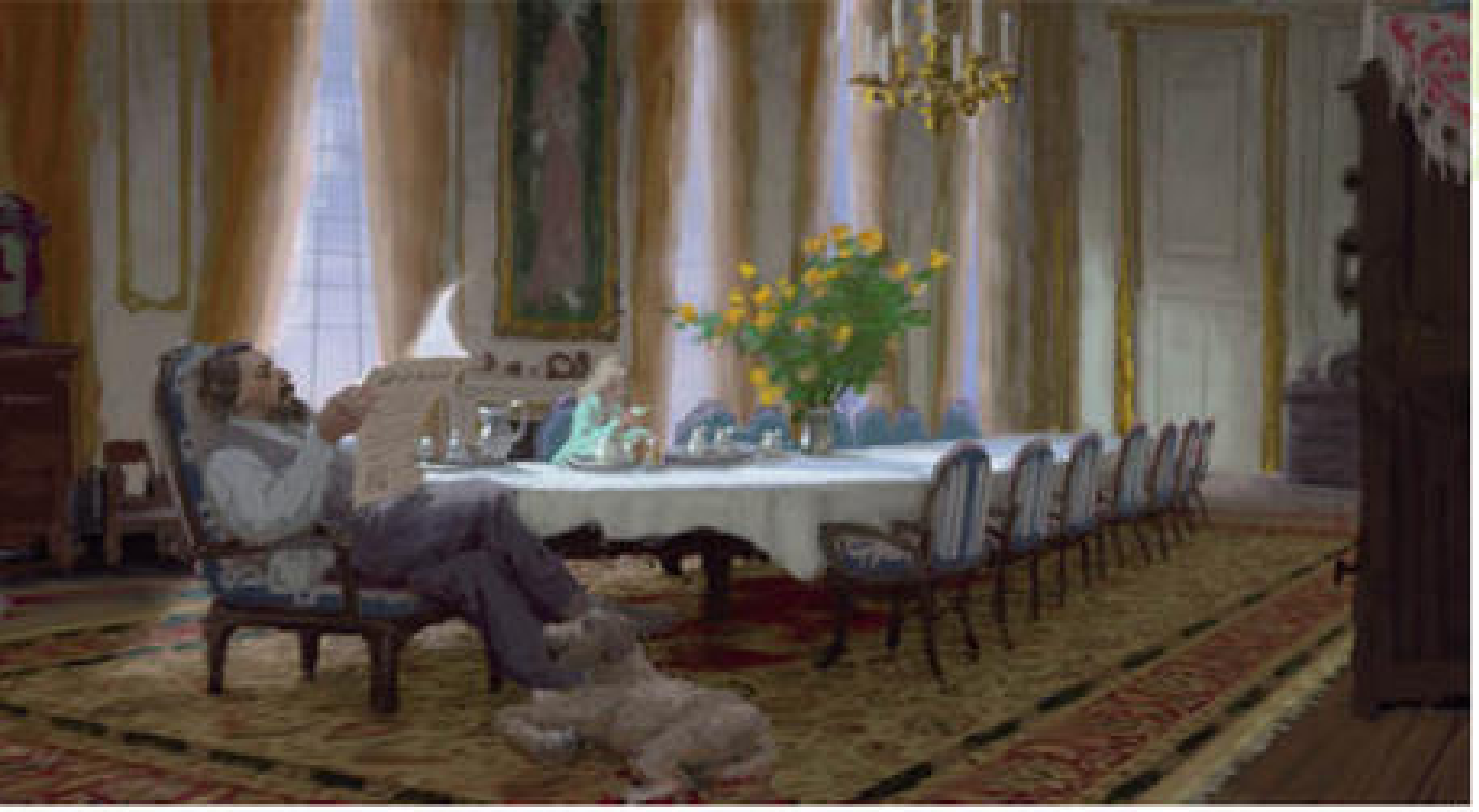
Armand Baltazar | digital

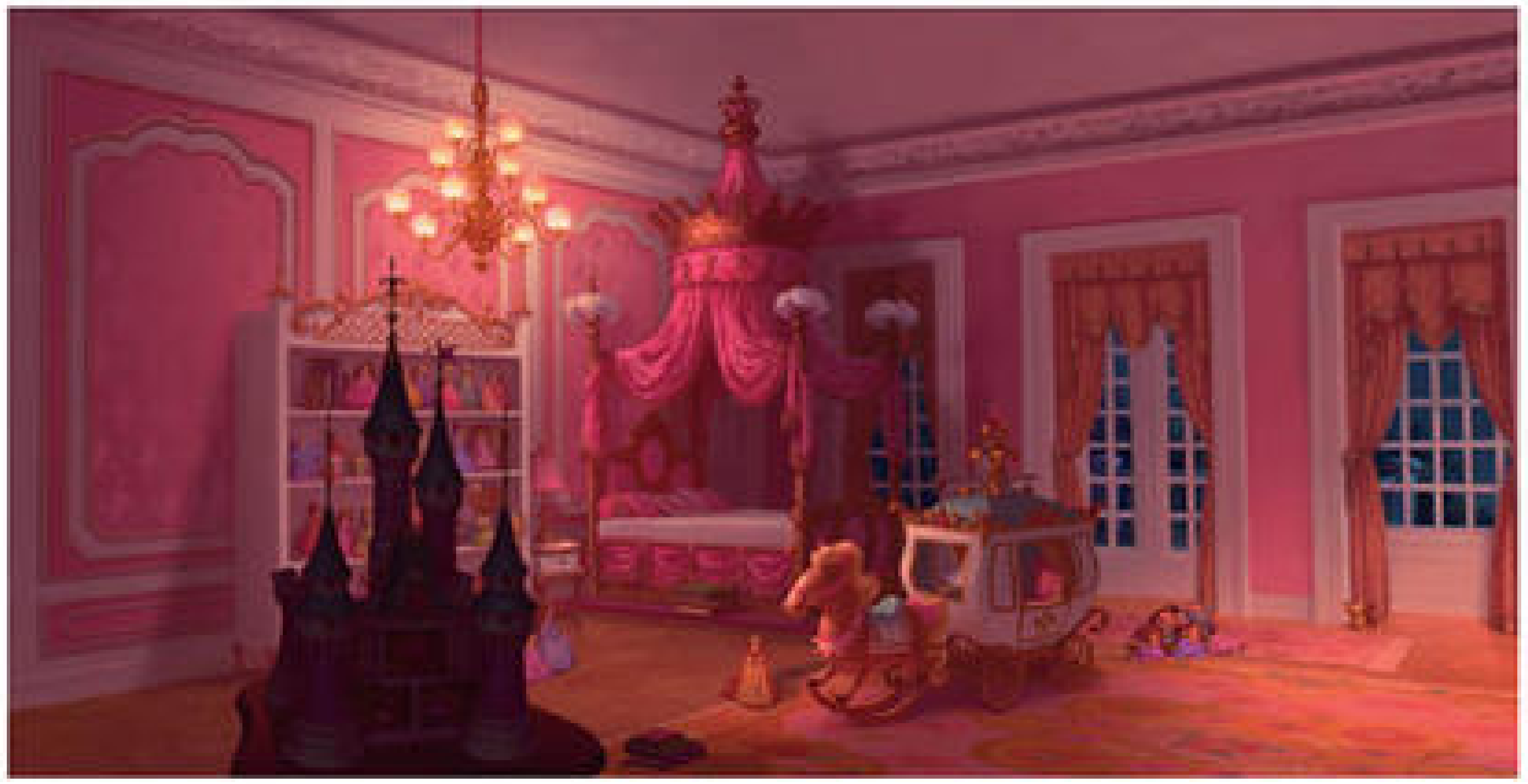


Armand Baltazar | digital



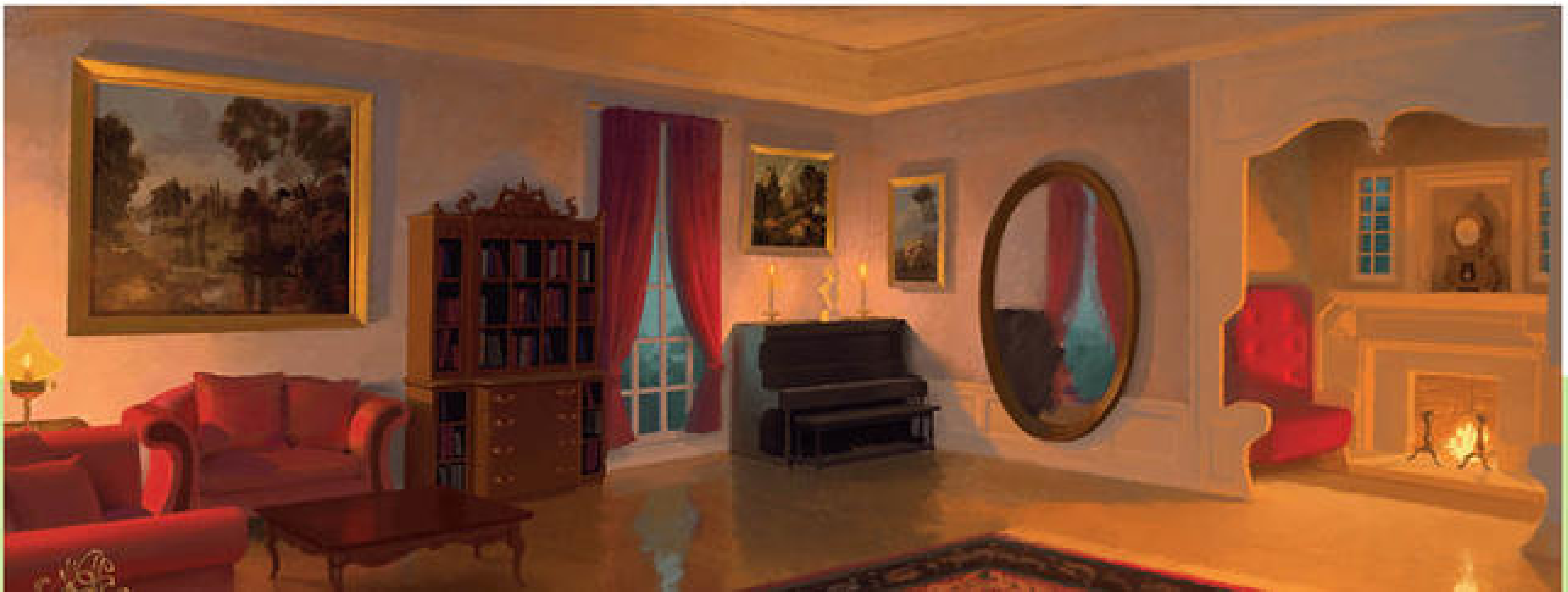
Ian Gooding | graphite, ink

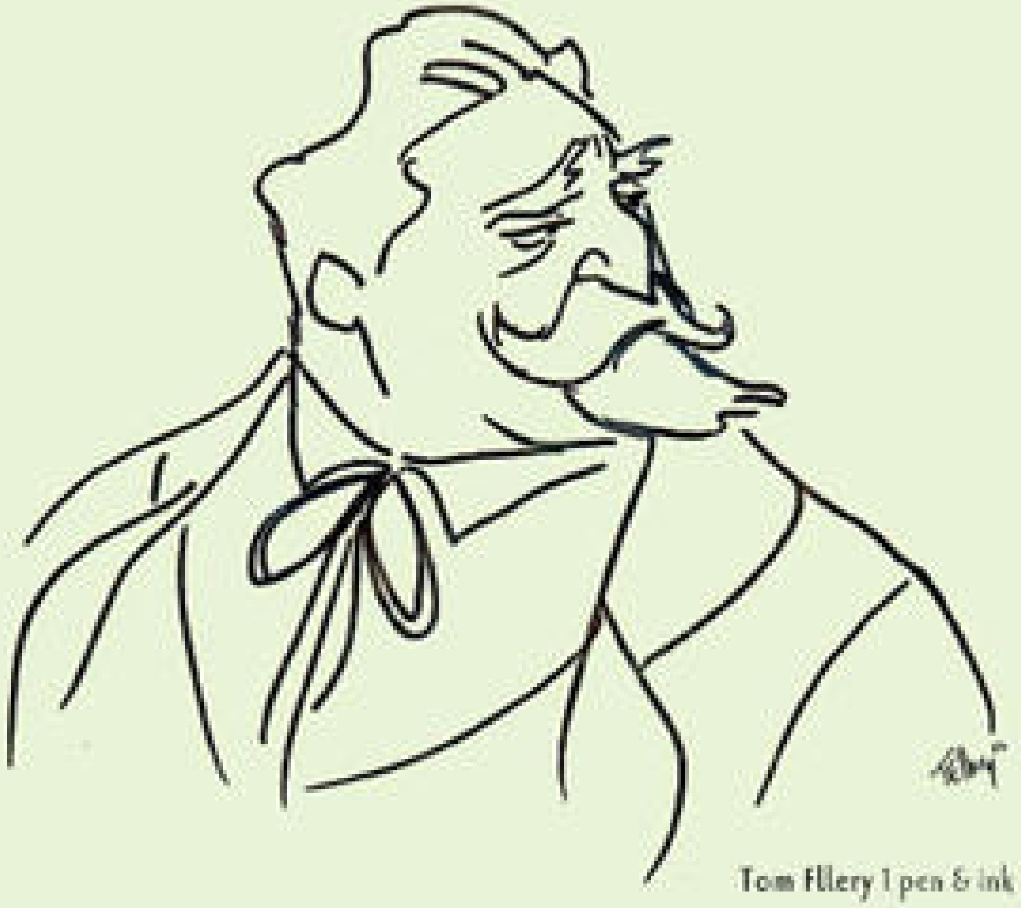




"When designing the interiors, we tried to stay true to the details and style cues of the real Garden District mansions, at the same time, we tailored the overall ambiance to the need of the characters that would inhabit them, and the demands of story. We knew the Bachelor's Quarters needed to be masculine and simple for the Prince while Charlotte's room like Dining Room, Study, and Kitchen never made it into the film due to story changes."

- Ian Cooding, art director





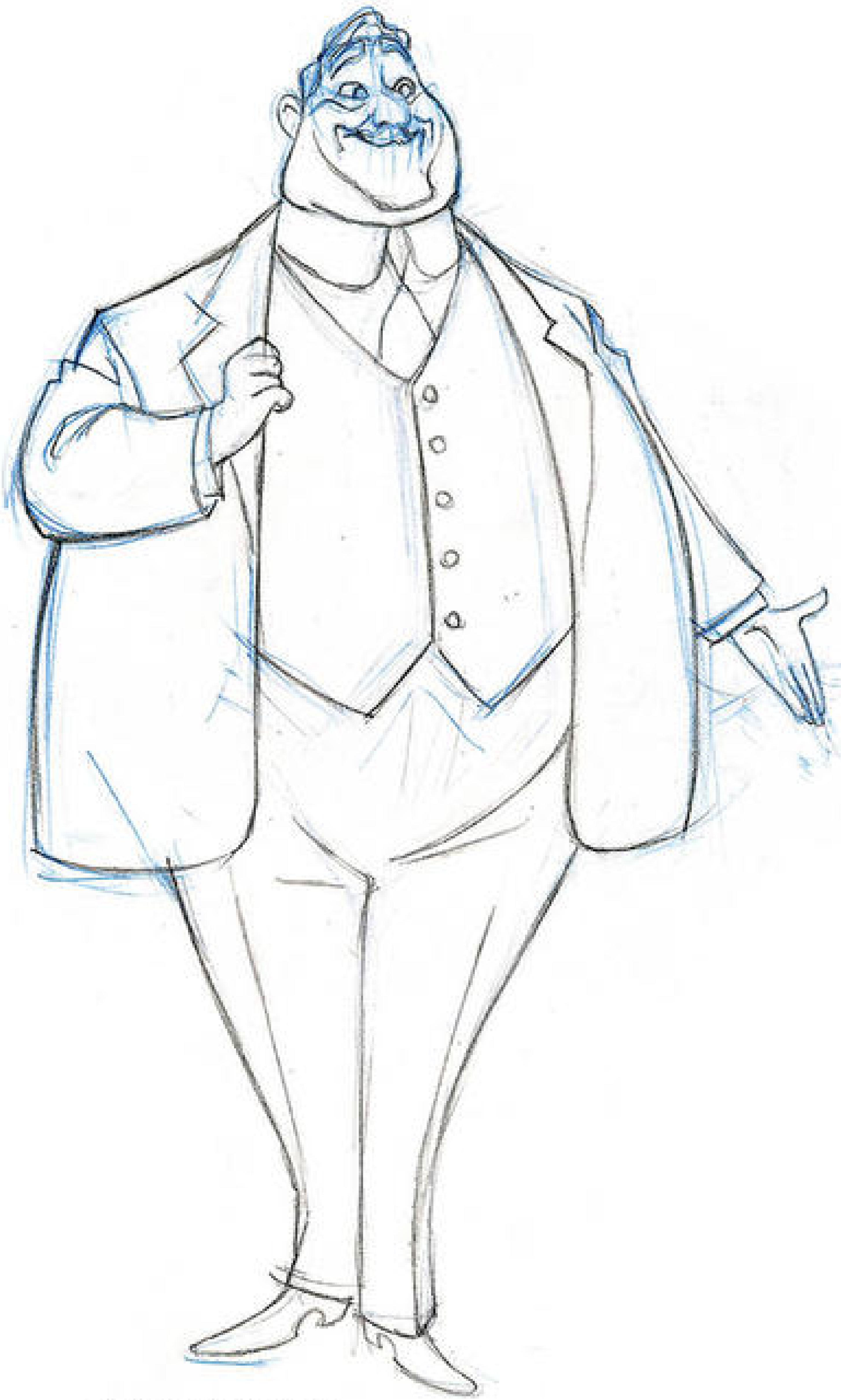
Tom Ellery | pen & ink

BIG DADDY

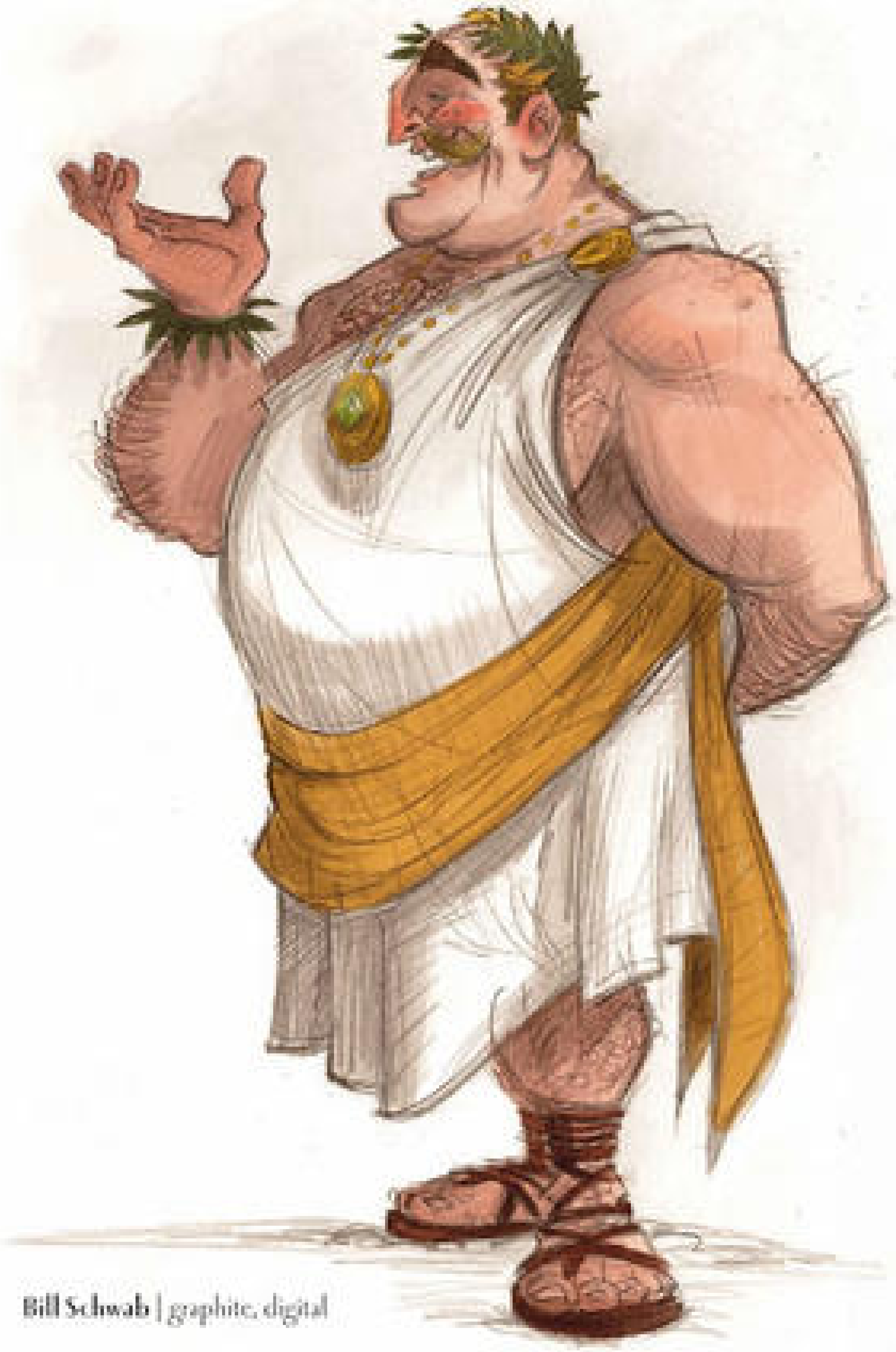
Duncan Marjoribanks, supervising animator for Big Daddy, is famed for animating Disney characters like Sebastian the Crab in *The Little Mermaid; Alladdin's pal, Abu* and *Ratcliffe*, villain in *Pocahontas*, Marjoribanks admits, "I dropped subtle hints that I'd be really interested in working. a human character this time out. And Big Daddy was just the right fit, I guess. And it's, nice that I can probably handle pretty much all the footage myself."

Big Daddy is an homage to that American archetype portrayed in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and Hush... Hush Sweet Charlotte*, made famous by veteran folk-singer-turned-actor Burl Ives. But where those characters were motivated by power and station to destroy their children, this Big Daddy has a motivation not of control or authority, but rather unbridled adoration and he wants nothing more than for his little princess. Charlotte, to get her heart's desire.

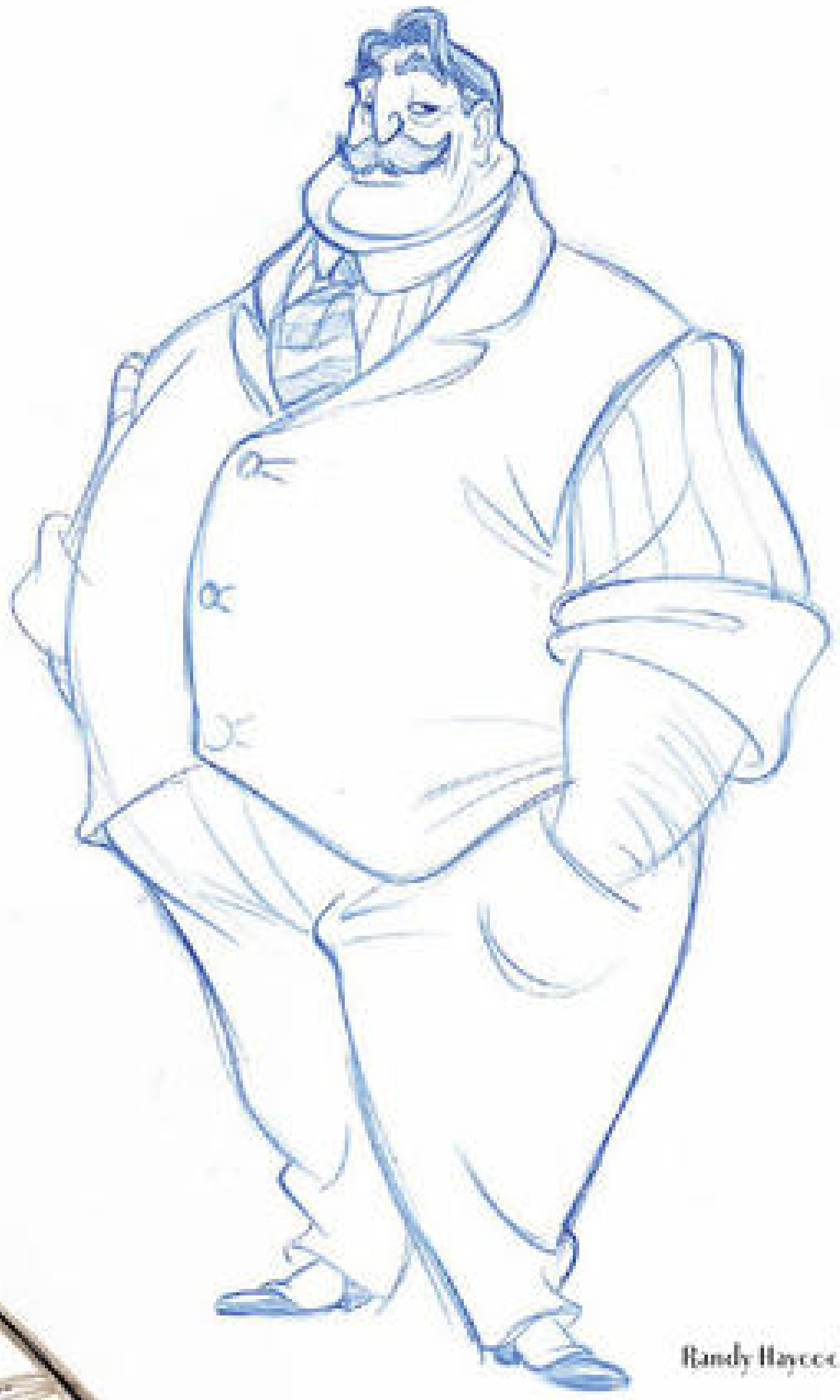
Attention to detail for every character, no matter how seemingly minor, became, strength of storytelling. Duncan Marjoribanks summarizes. "You feel like all the characters have a life off-screen."



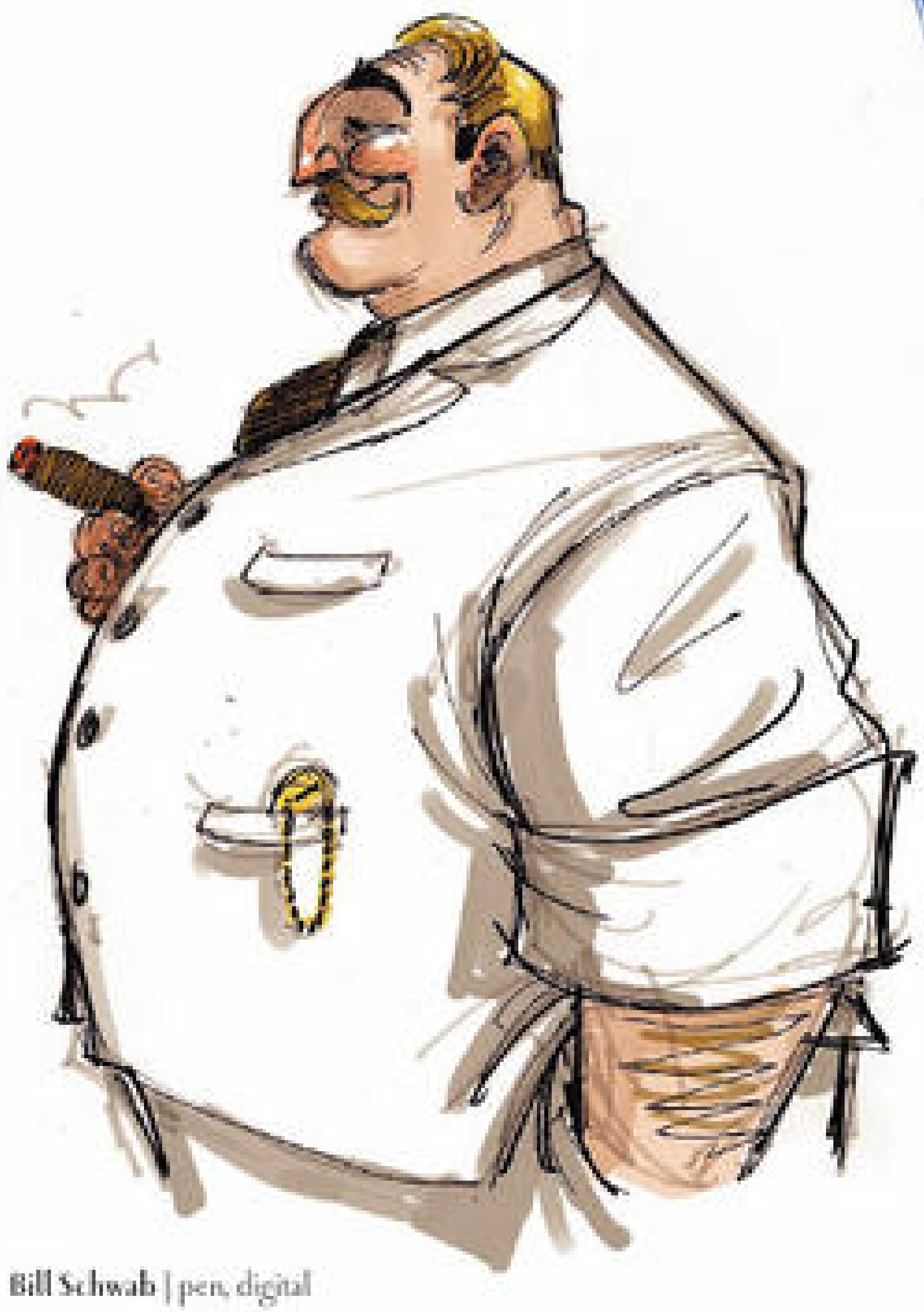
Duncan Marjoribanks | graphite



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



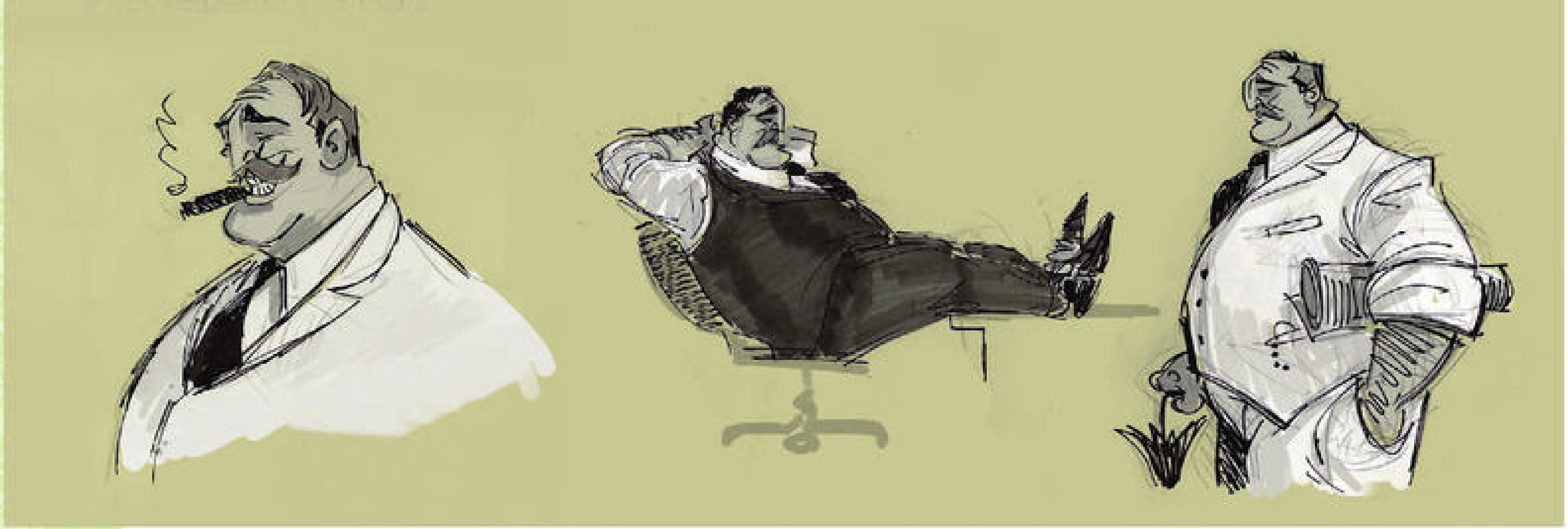
Randy Haycock | graphite



Bill Schwab | pen, digital

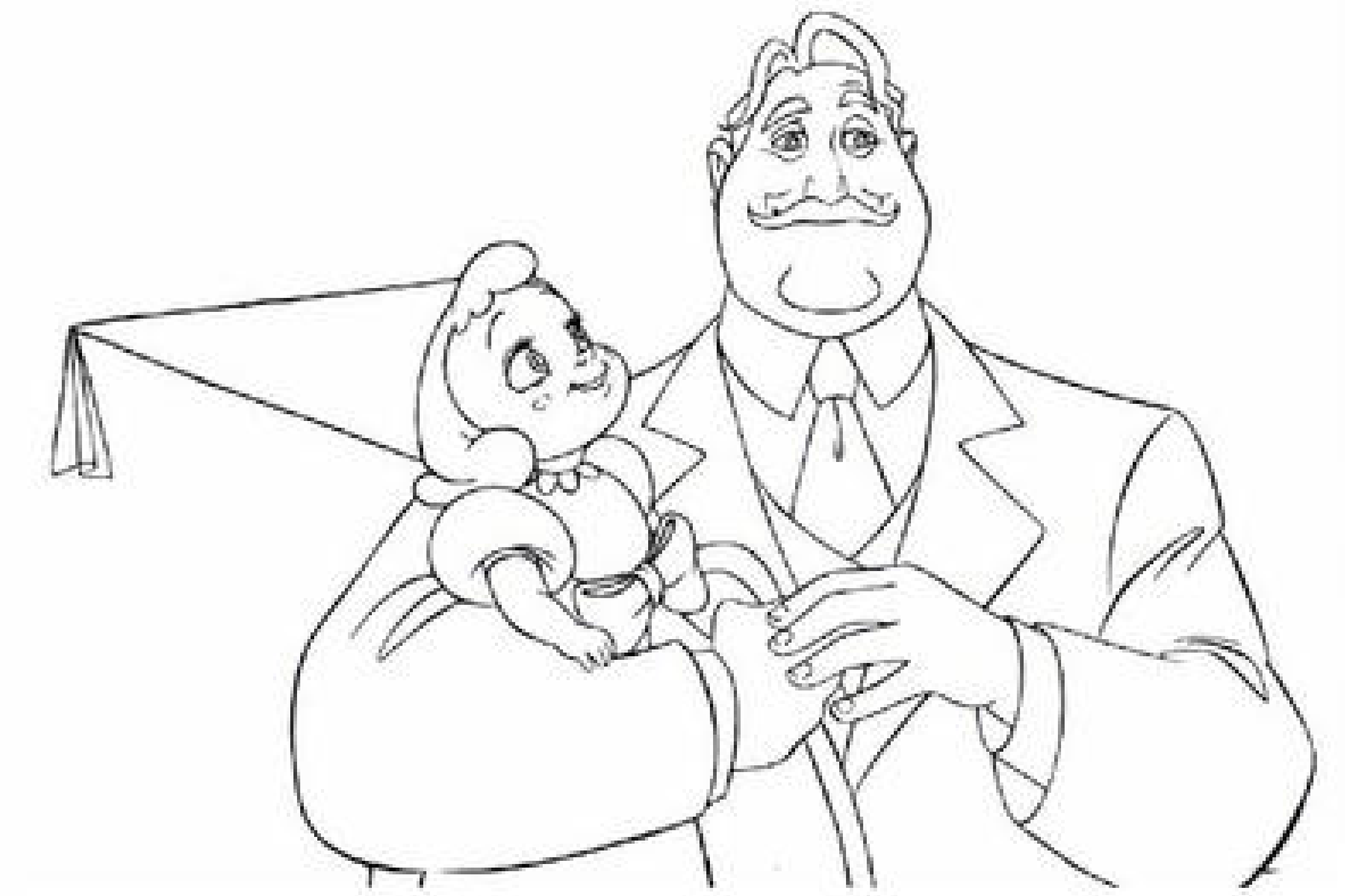
"There's a great pleasure in drawing. Working in a medium that's transparent allows you to focus on what you need to express. When animating Big Daddy, I wanted to express his friendly, imposing, and powerful characteristics."

—DUNCAN MARJORIBANKS,
supervising animator

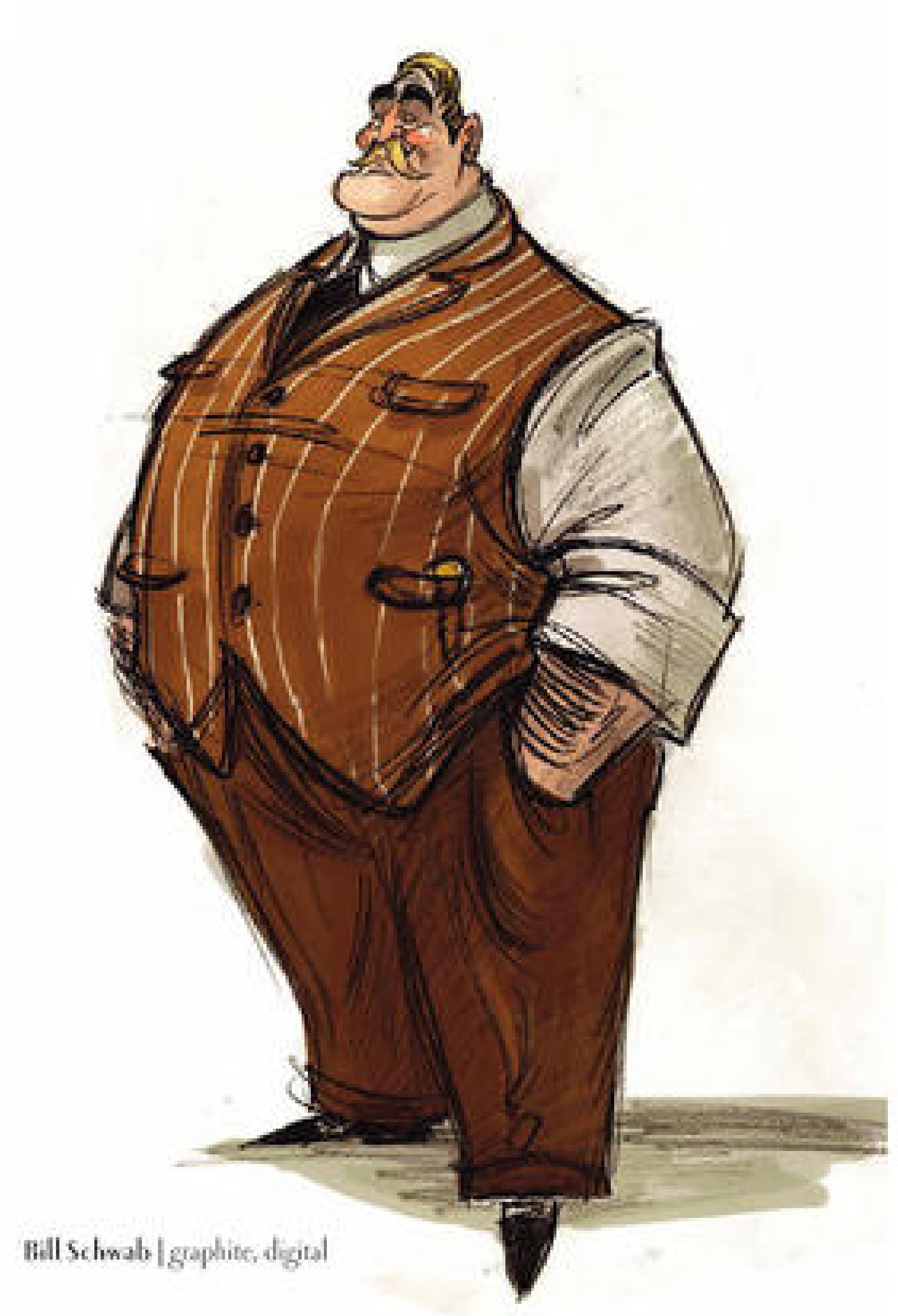


Bill Schwab | pen, digital

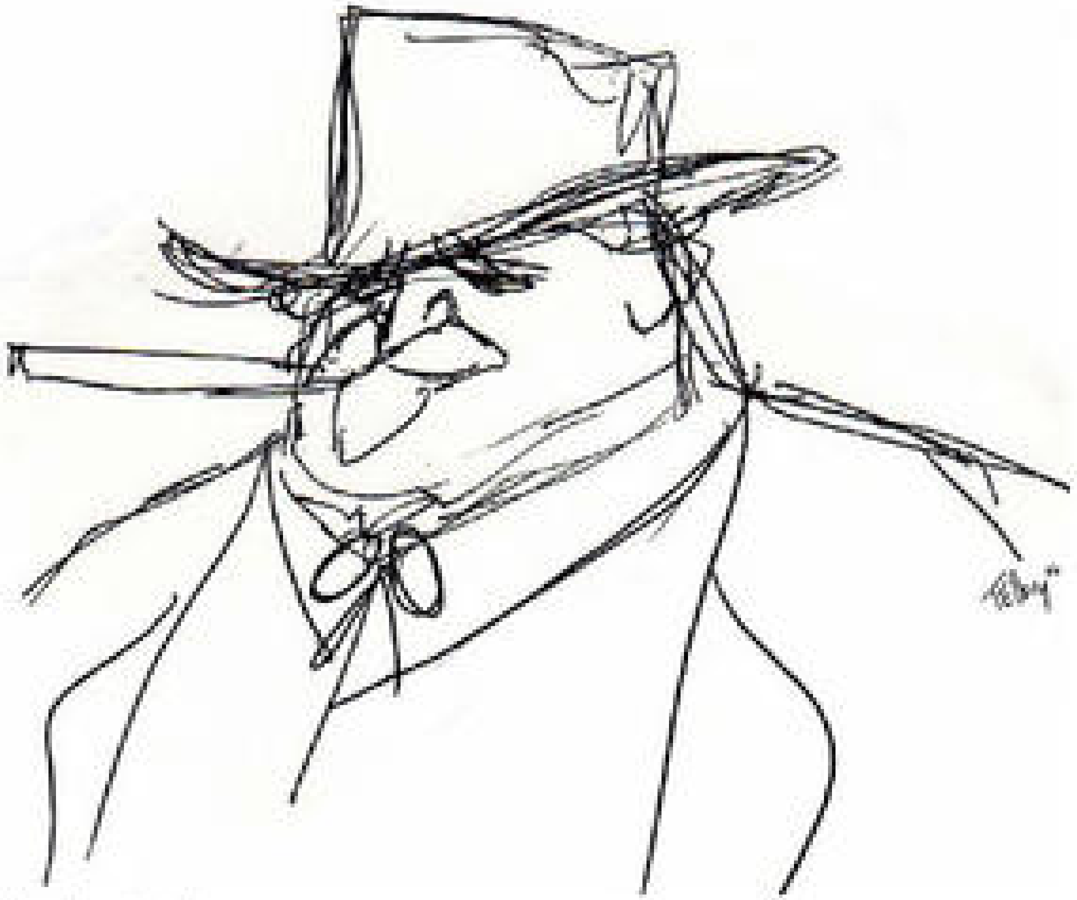
"My process is to go away and do my research and start drawing. Once we got the script, I really started to feel who these people are, and we started looking at period illustrators, and Disney films that Ron and John liked, and just started building from there."
—BILL SCHWAB, character designer



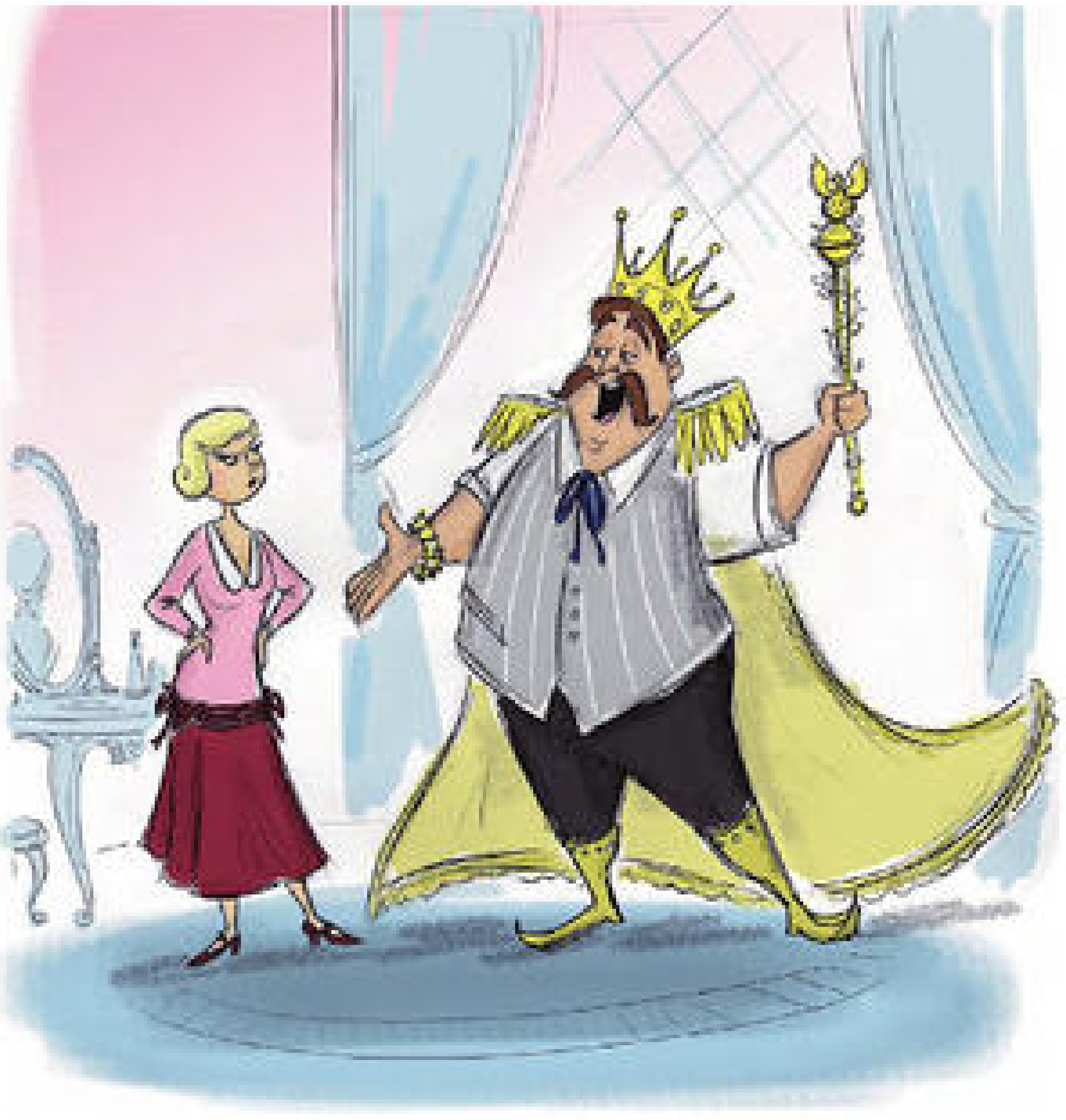
Marianne Tucker | graphite



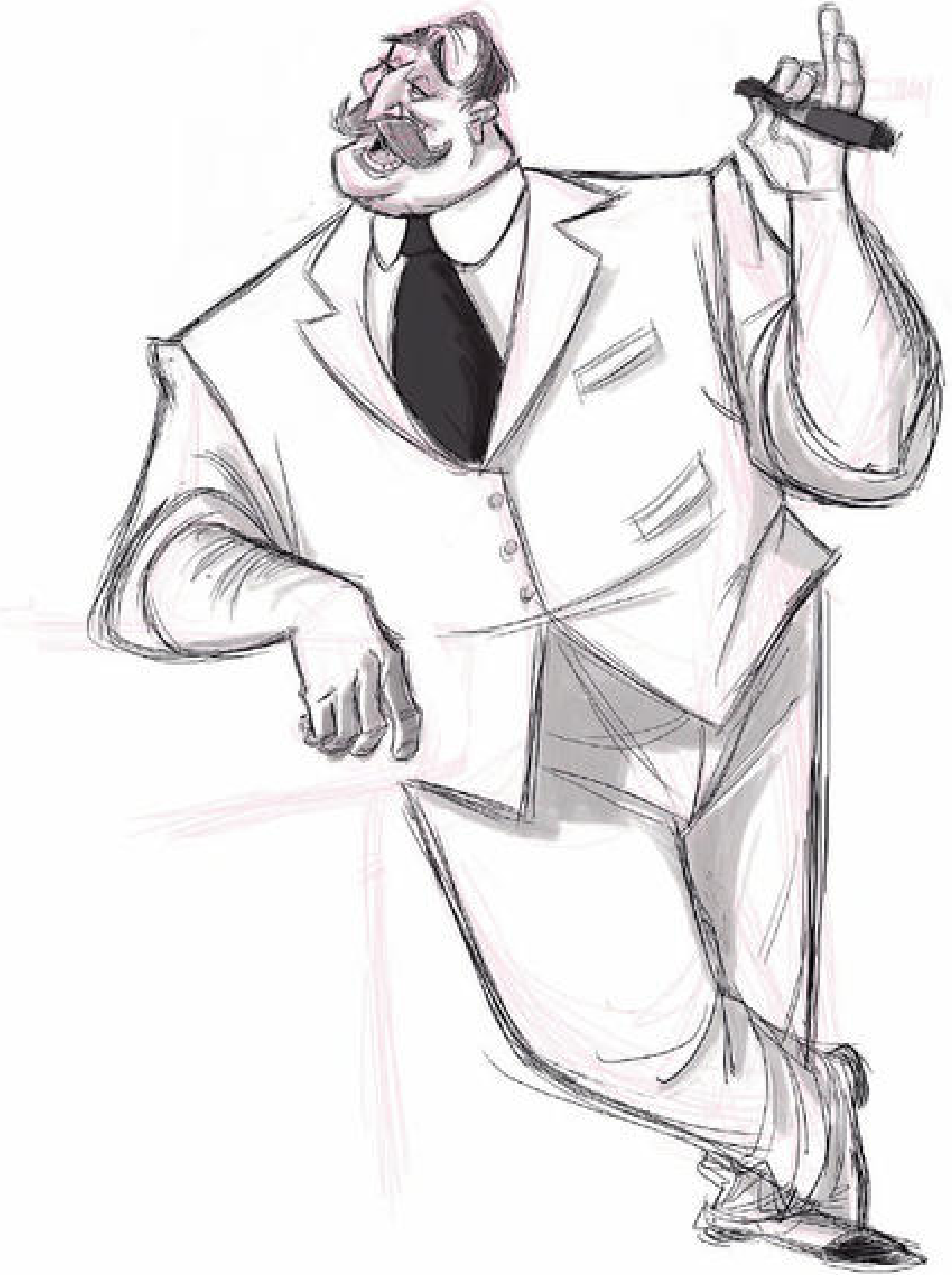
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



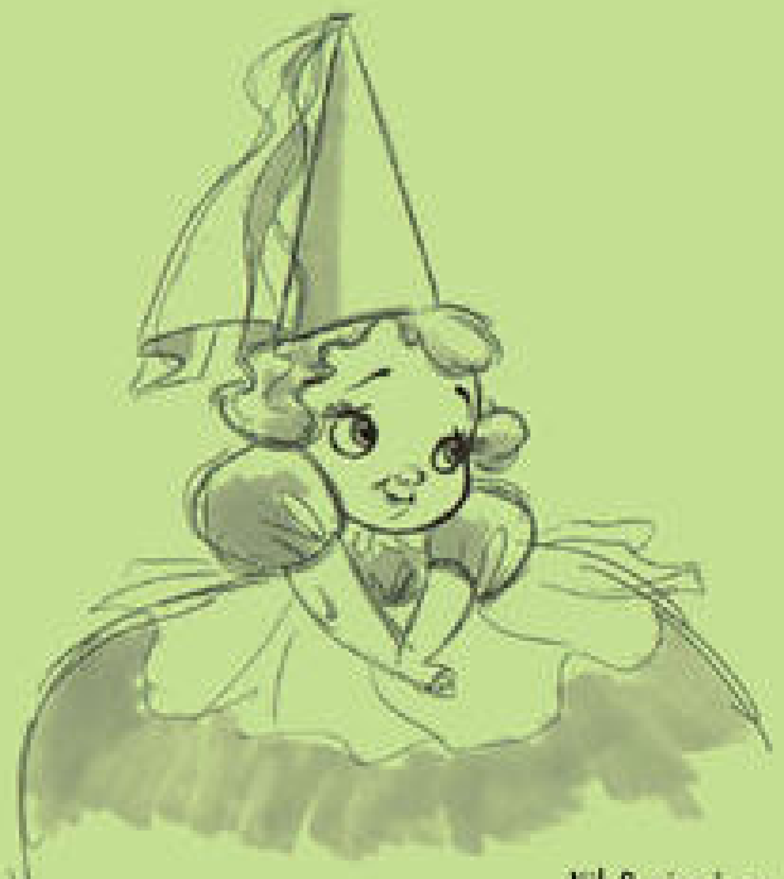
Tom Ellery | pen & ink



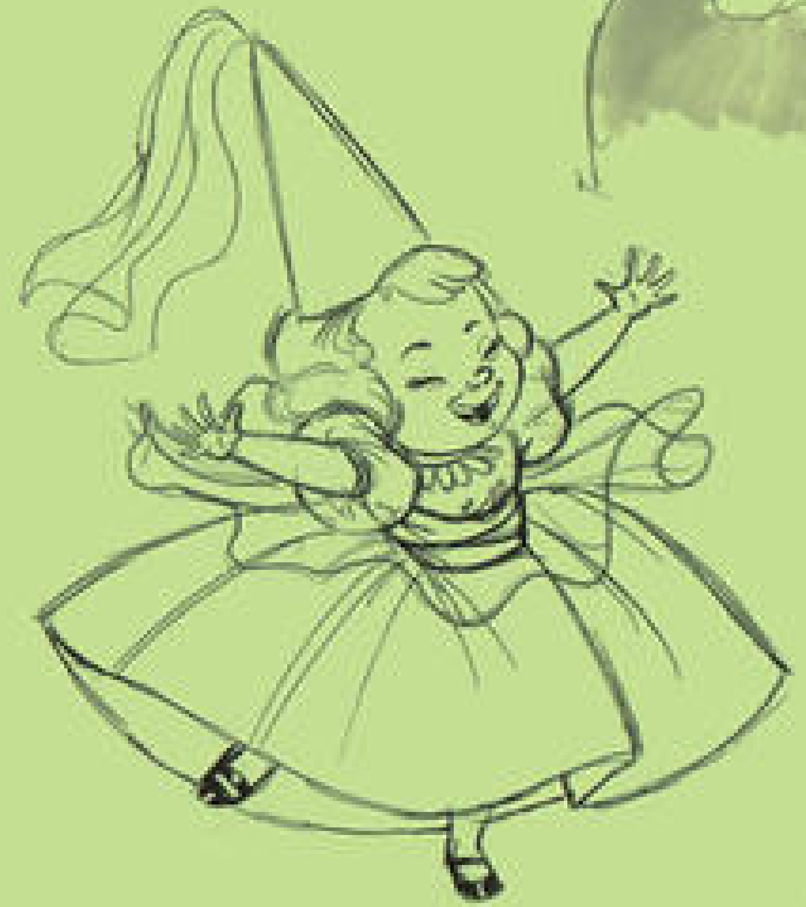
Josie Trinidad | digital



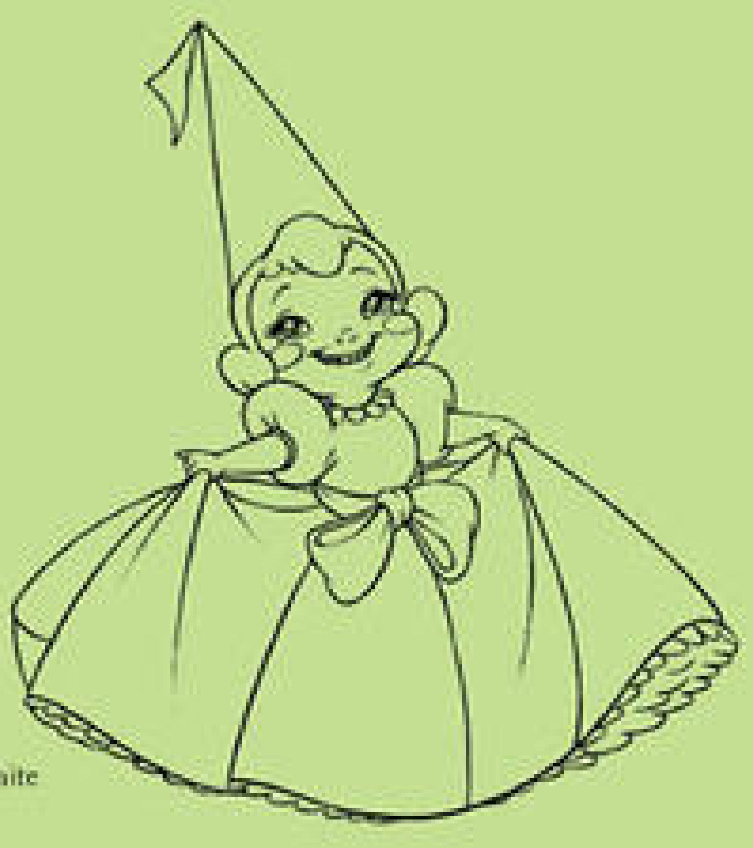
Bruce Smith | digital



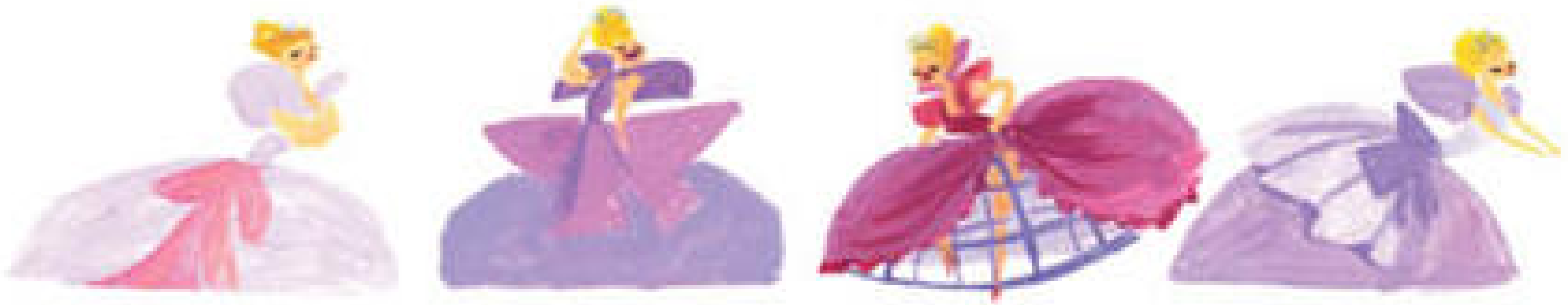
Nik Ranien | pen



Nik Ranien | pen



Margie Daniels | graphite



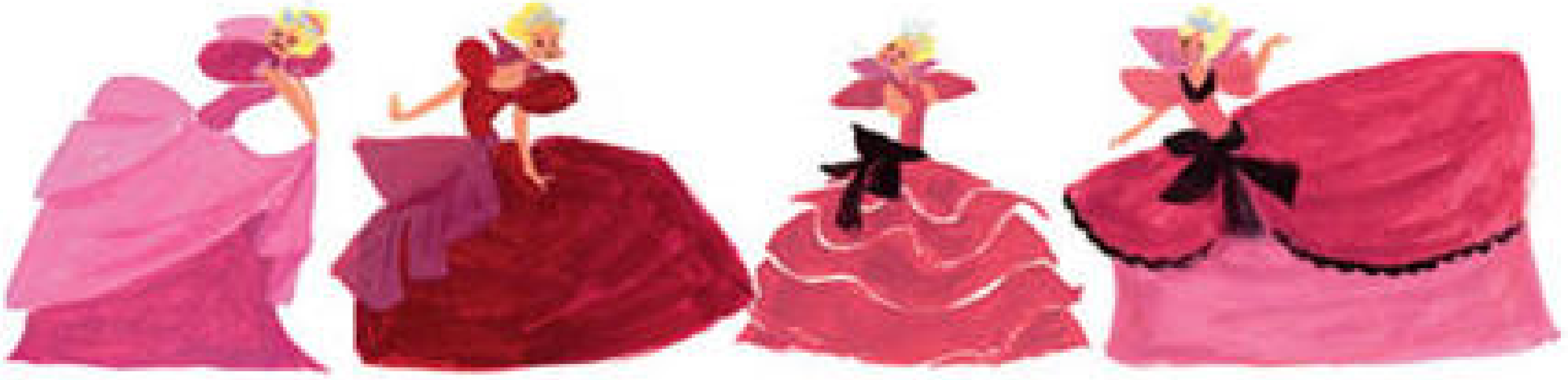
DADDY'S LITTLE PRINCESS

The ultimate early-twentieth century rich little girl. Charlotte is not exactly the stereotyped bratty daughter of wealth. Although her bedroom it appointed with shelves of fairy tale books, rows of dolls in every princess costume imaginable. an exquisitely carved hobby horse, and a grand dollhouse "castle", and happens to occupy a fanciful, storybook. turret on La Bouff mansion.

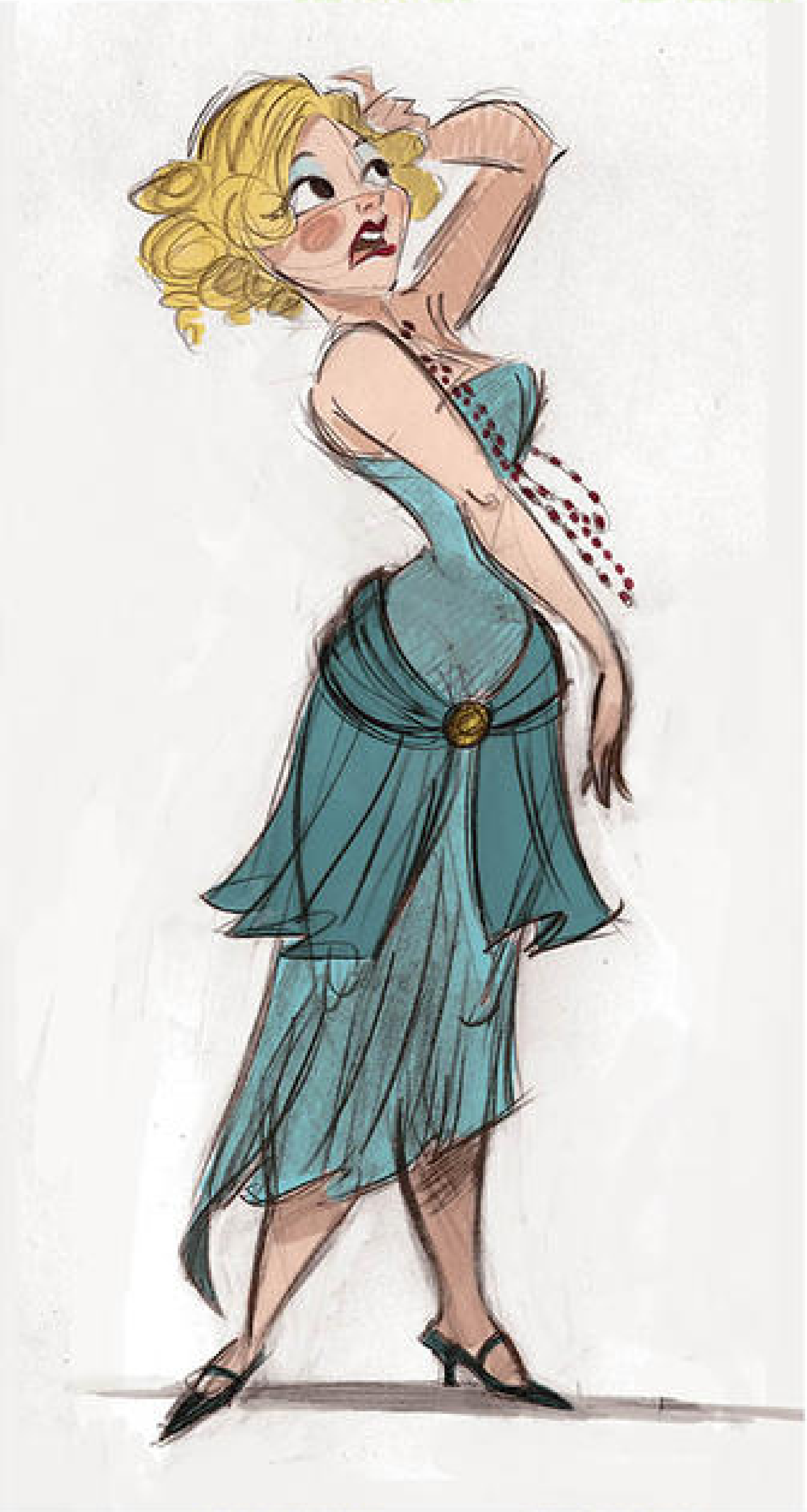
Big Daddy dotes on his blonde, blue-eyed dear one, taking every opportunity to feed her fantasies, which include marriage to a prince and becoming a princess in the process, even if she has to kiss a few frog "Charlotte is a spoiled southern belle who is not by nature a mean person, but because of her lifestyle can sometimes be oblivious to the needs of people around her," says Nik Ranieri. "She cares about others but only when she's not focusing on herself which, unfortunately, is not very often."

Part of the grounding provided to Charlotte is the friendship of Tiana, daughter of the family seamstress, a sensible, nonfrog-kissing girl who grows up to become Charlotte's lifelong friend.

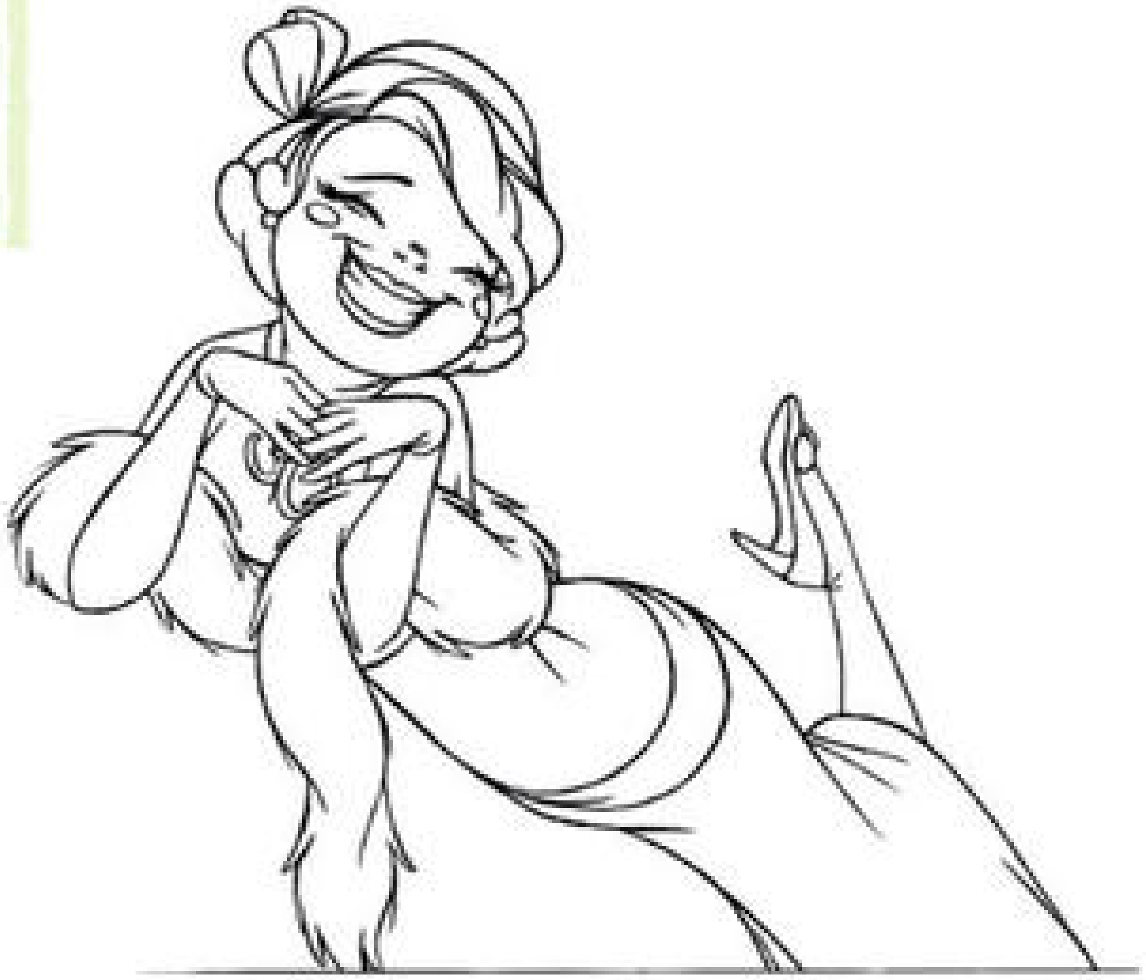
"I love Charlotte," says color styling supervisor Maria Gonzales, "She's just got a lot of character to her—and the look that we've been able to get. We kind of went over the top when she's in her princess dress ... and that's intentional. We just wanted her to glow."



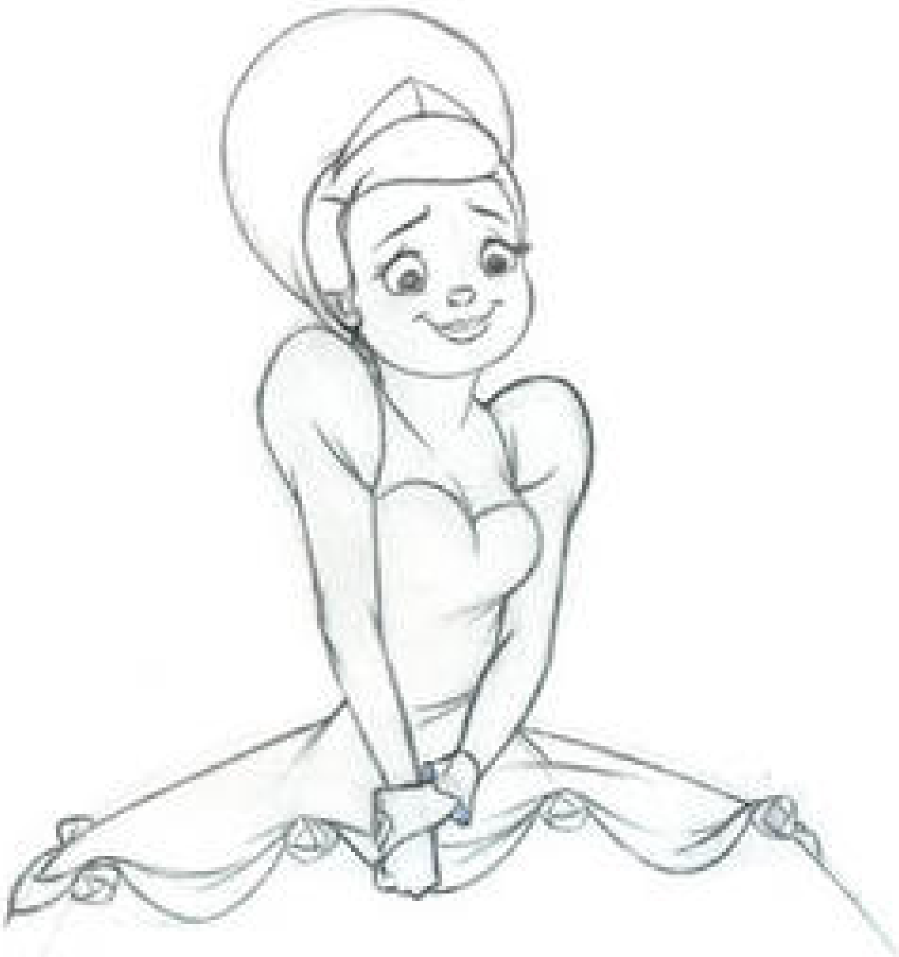
Lorelay Bove | goache paint



Bill Schwab | graphite digital

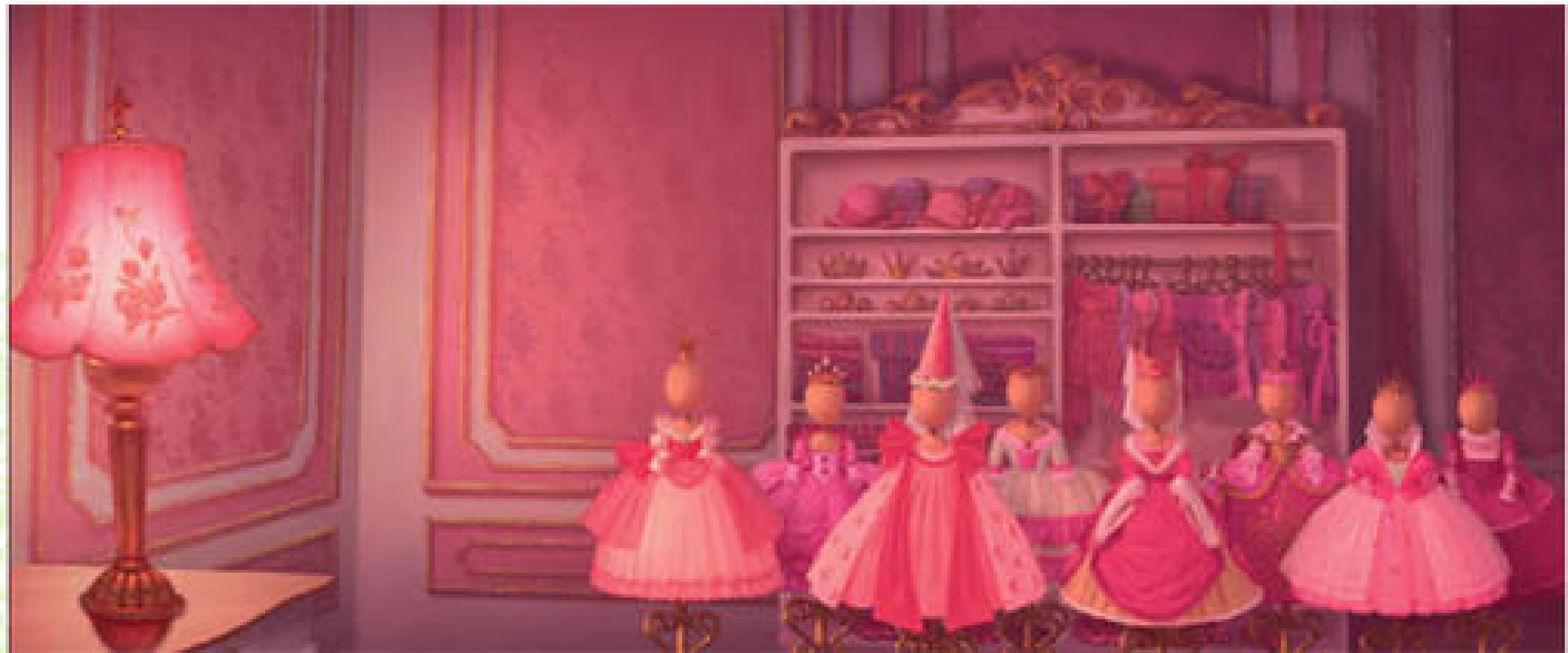


Margie Daniels | graphite

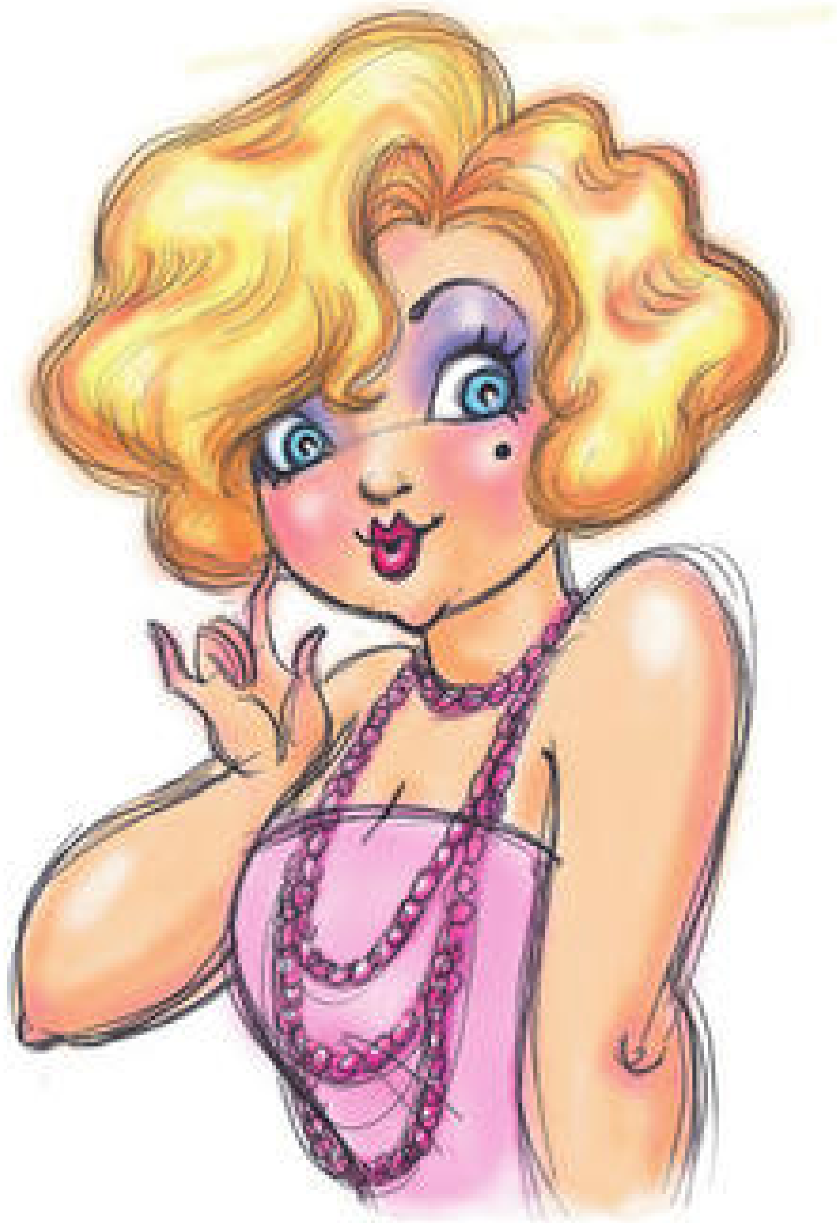


Nik Ranieri | graphite

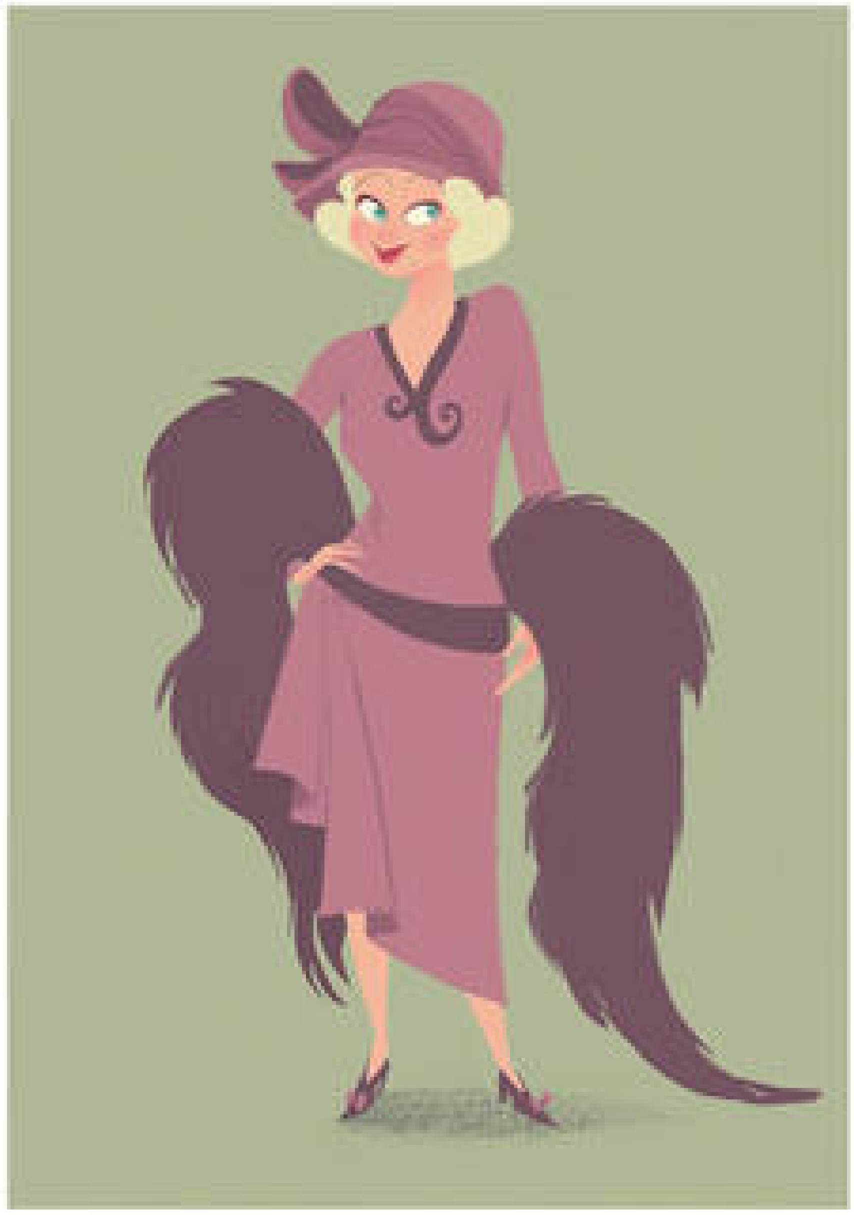
"I have five kids under the age of twelwe and four of them are girls. So you can't help but have a wealth of inspirations for a character the young Charlotte my youngest daughter Lily is just like her. She's very much a little princess."
—Nic RANIERI, supervising animator



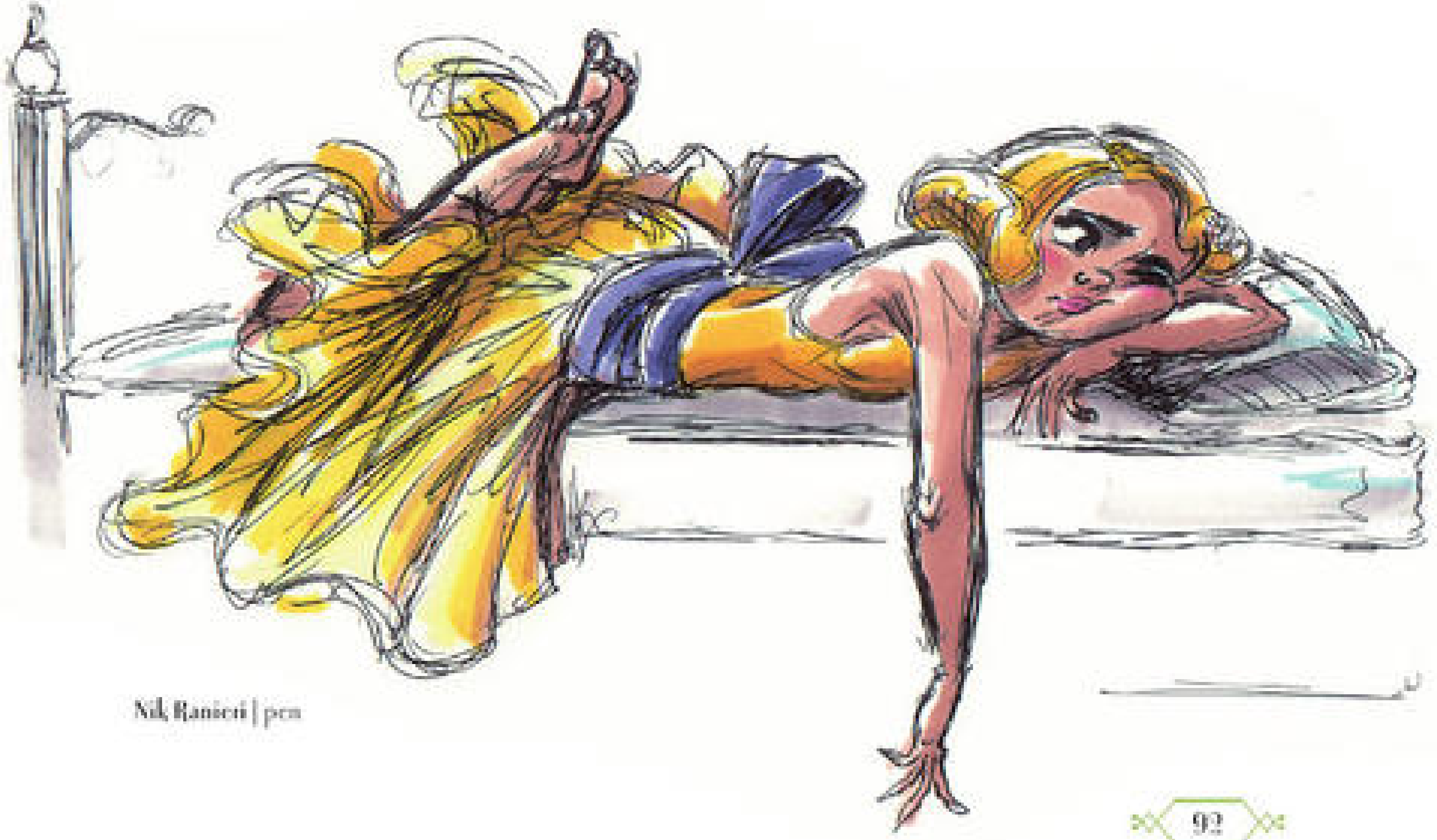
Ian Gooding | digital



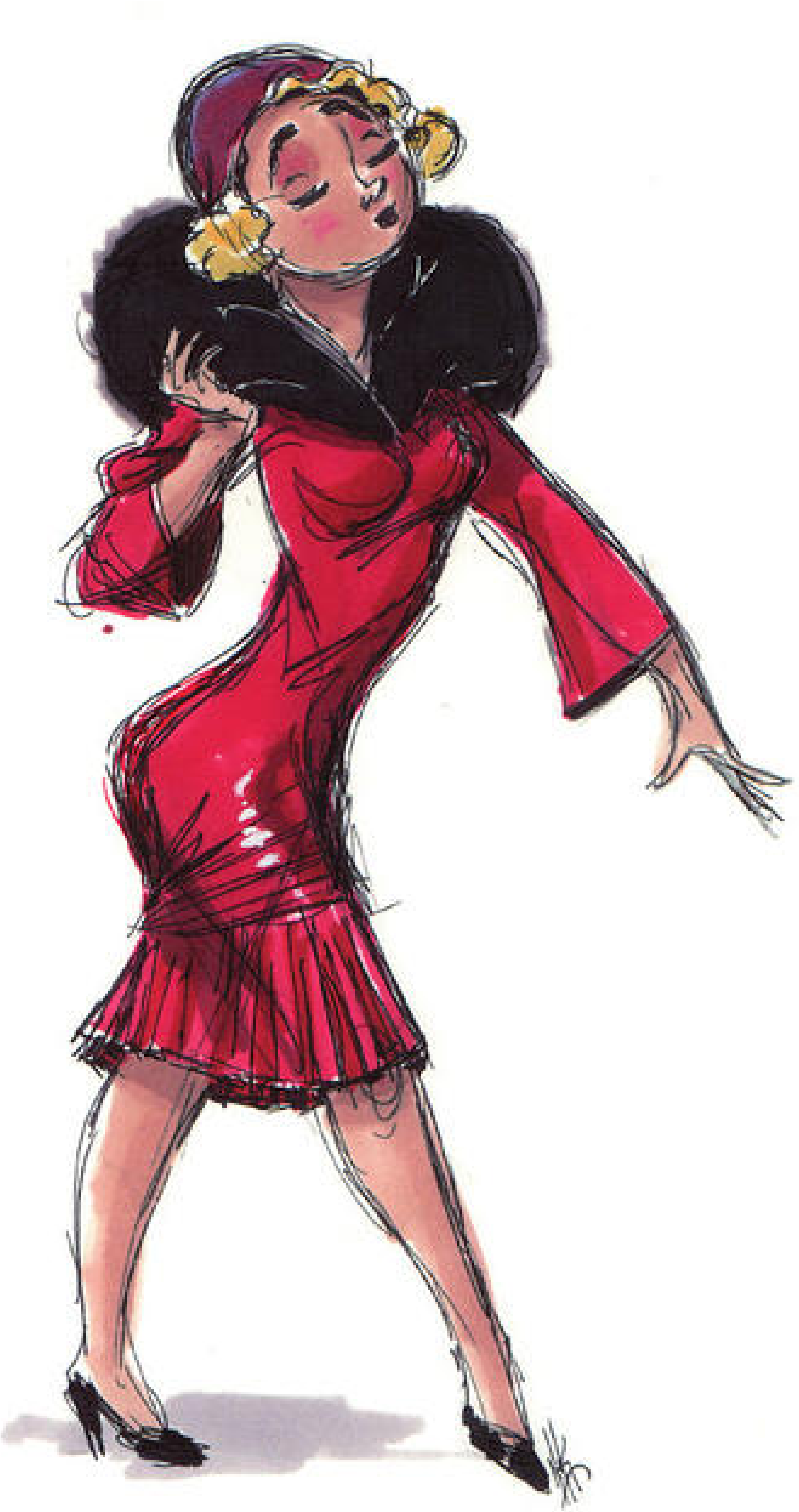
Kevin Gollaher | digital



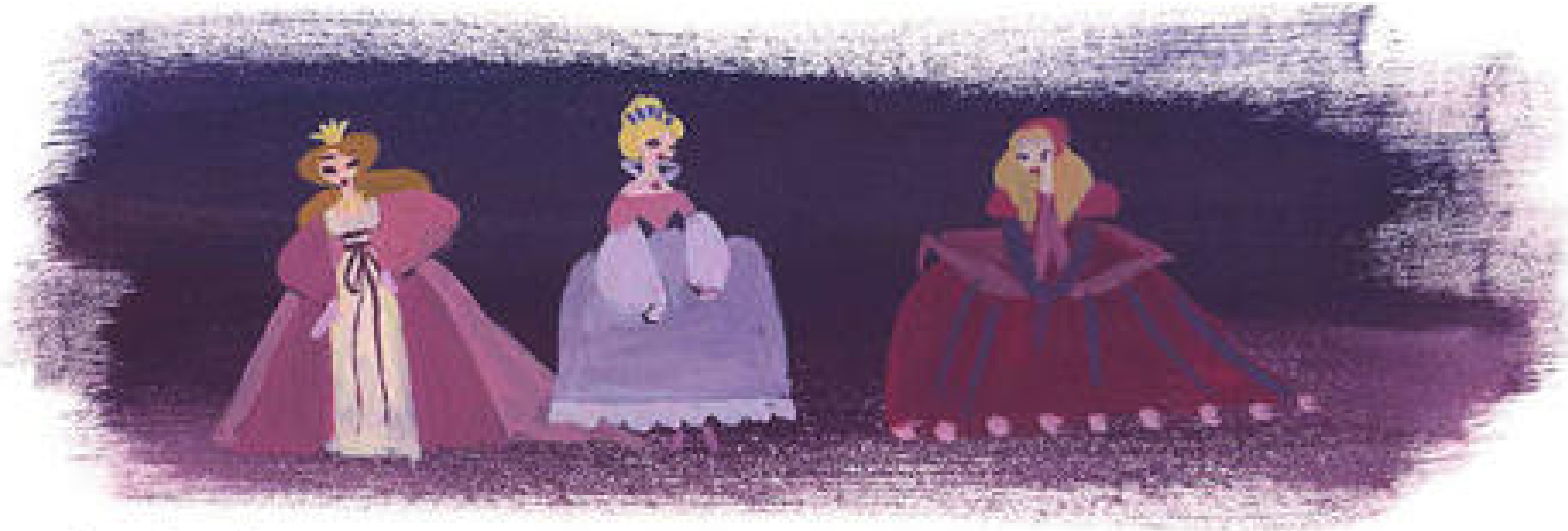
Lorelay Bove | digital



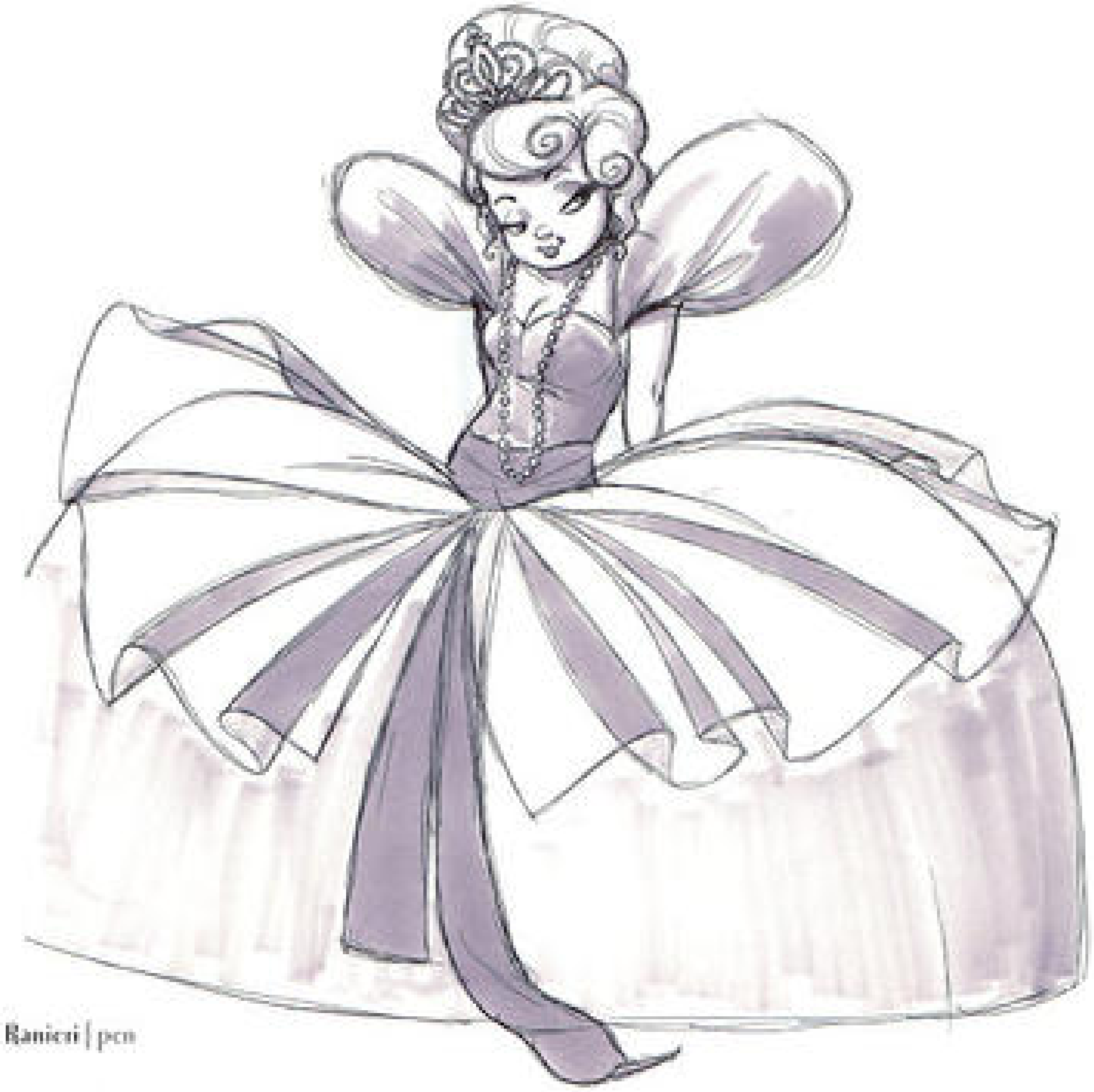
Nik Ranieri | pen



Nik Ranieri | pen



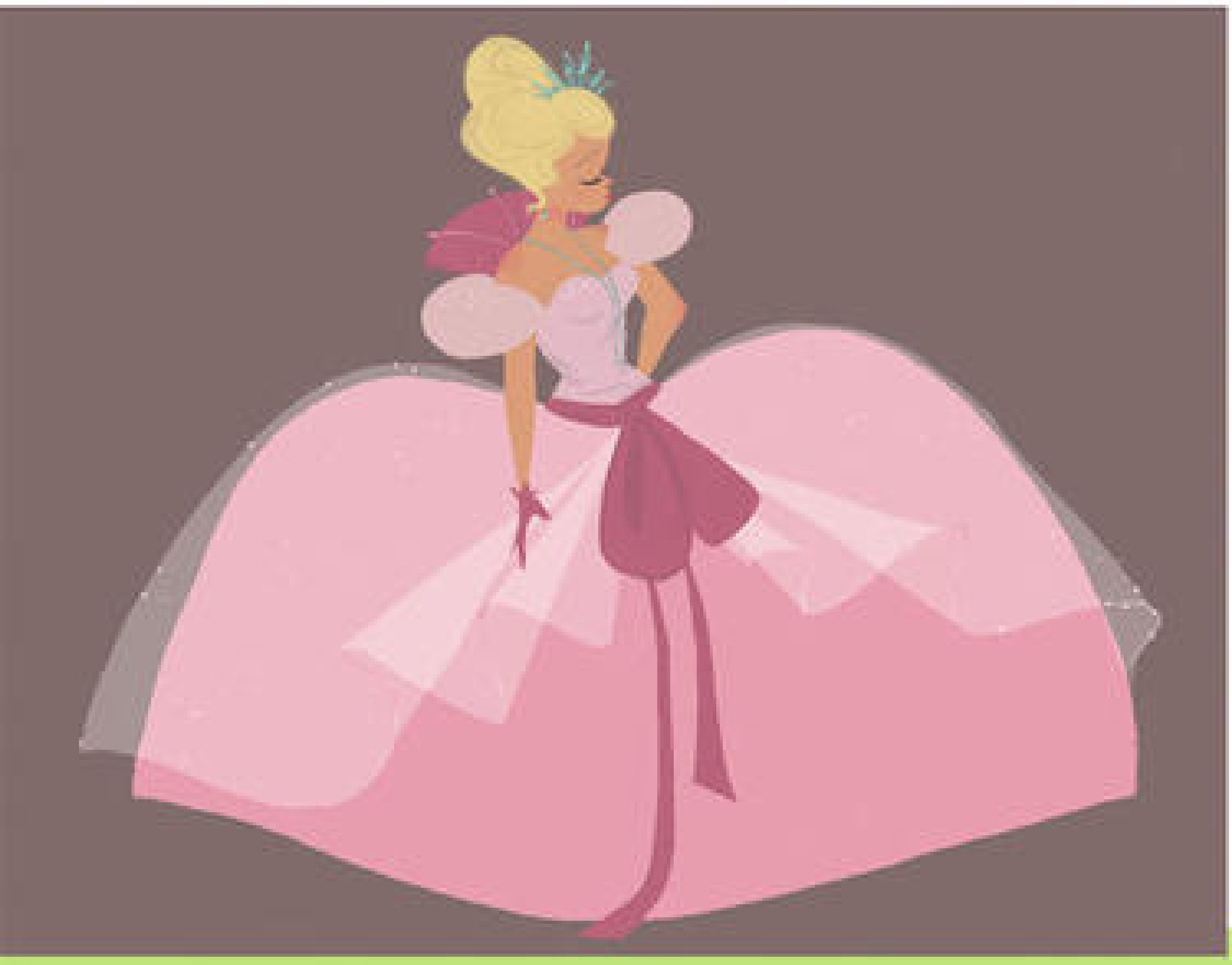
Lorelay Bove | gouache paint



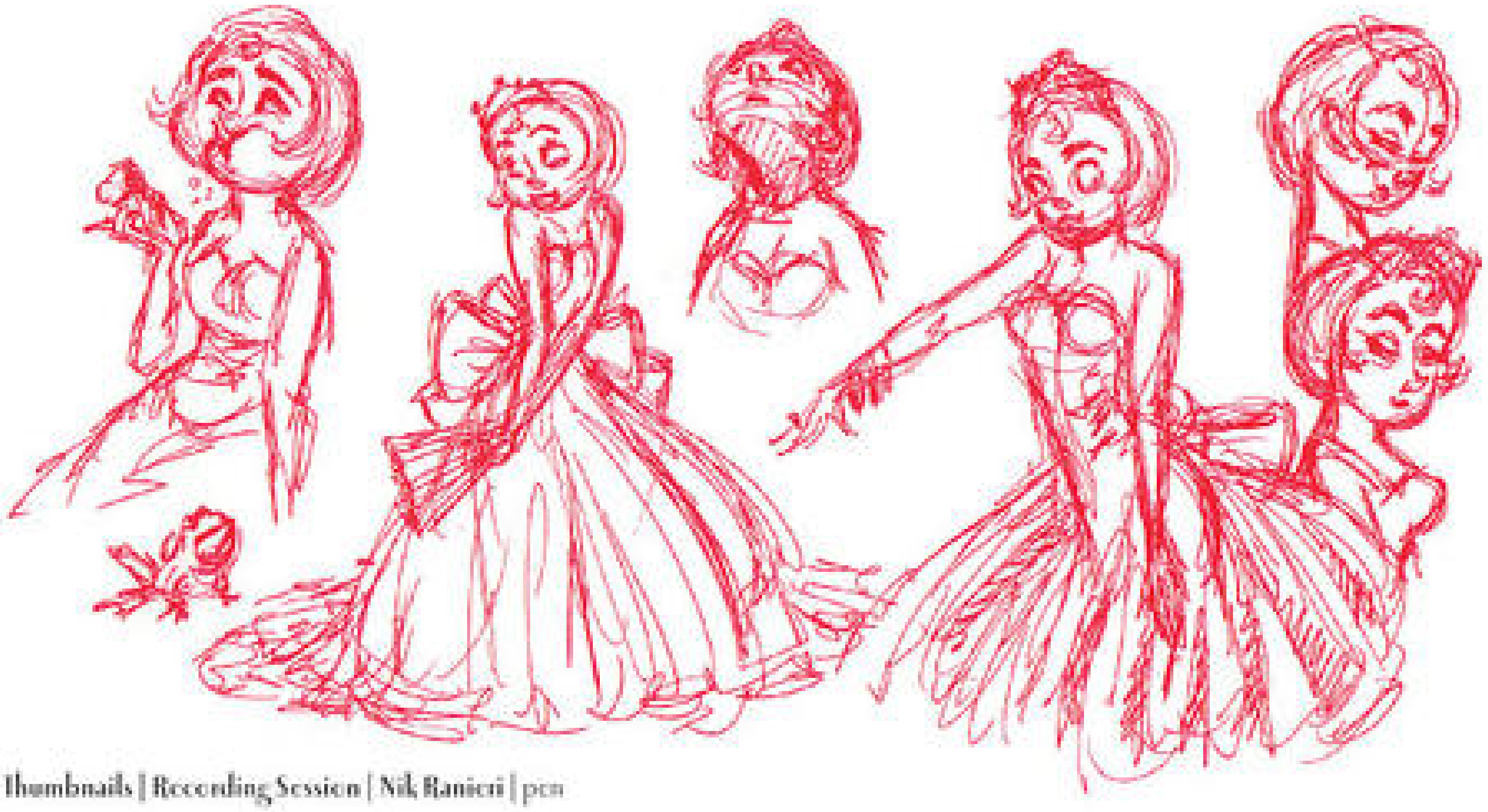
Nik Ranieri | pen

"Charlotte was a dream assignment. I always look for characters with a strong element of comedy to them and that usually resigns itself to sidekick characters. I always wanted to animate a woman but they tend to be consigned to playing the heroine and are therefore rather serious in their performances. With Charlotte, I had the best of both worlds."

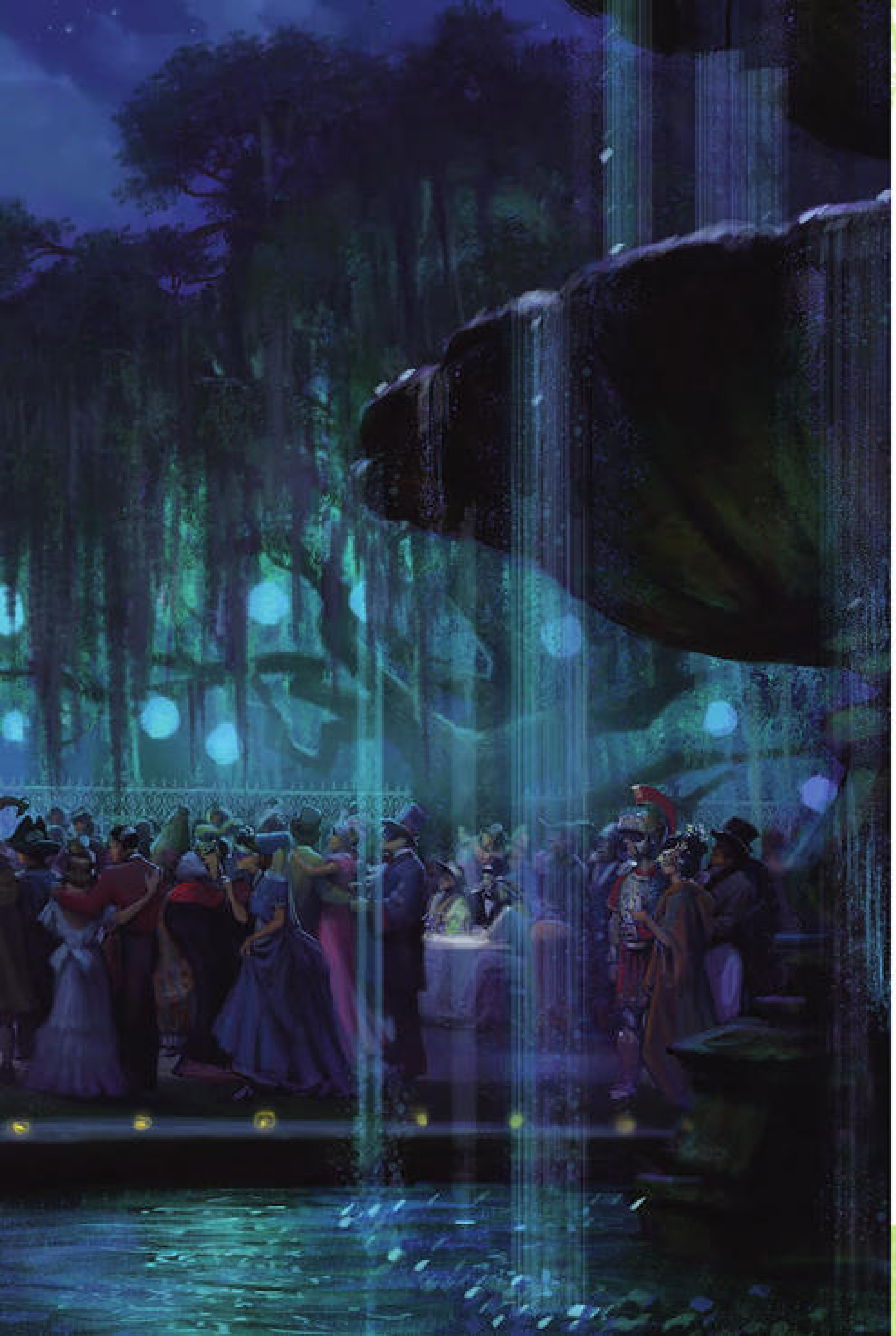
—NIK RANIERI, supervising animator



Lorelay Bove | digital



Thumbnails | Recording Session | Nik Ranieri | pen



THE MASQUERADE BALL

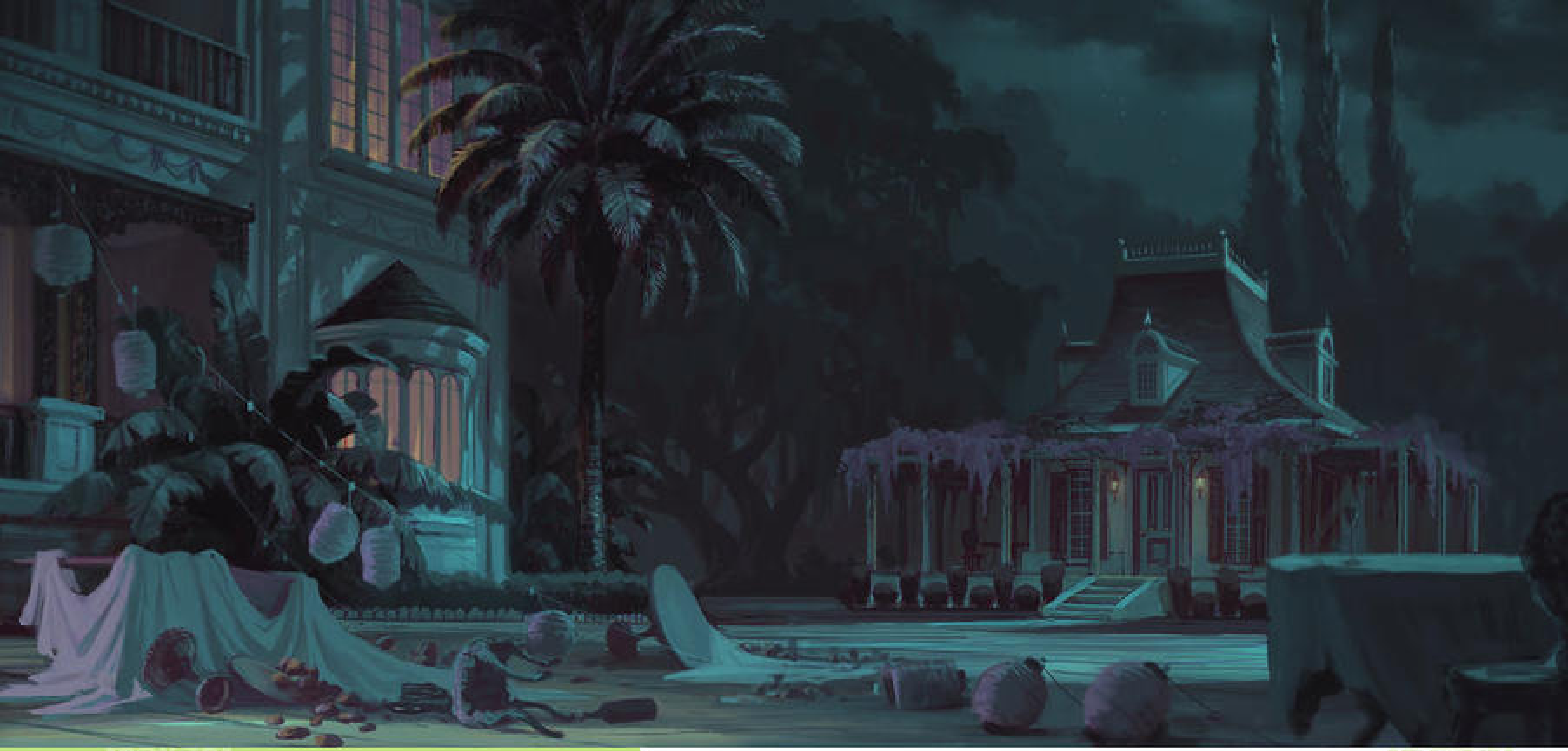
The La Bouff mansion—beyond being the dwelling of Big Daddy and Charlotte, the symbol of the La Bouff fortune, the home of Eudora's finest client, and a play place for Tiana—holds a key role in the transformational magic at the heart of the film's story.

It is within the already magical and mysterious events and surroundings of a gala masquerade ball that the magical transformation of hero and heroine into a pair of wayfaring frogs becomes manifest.

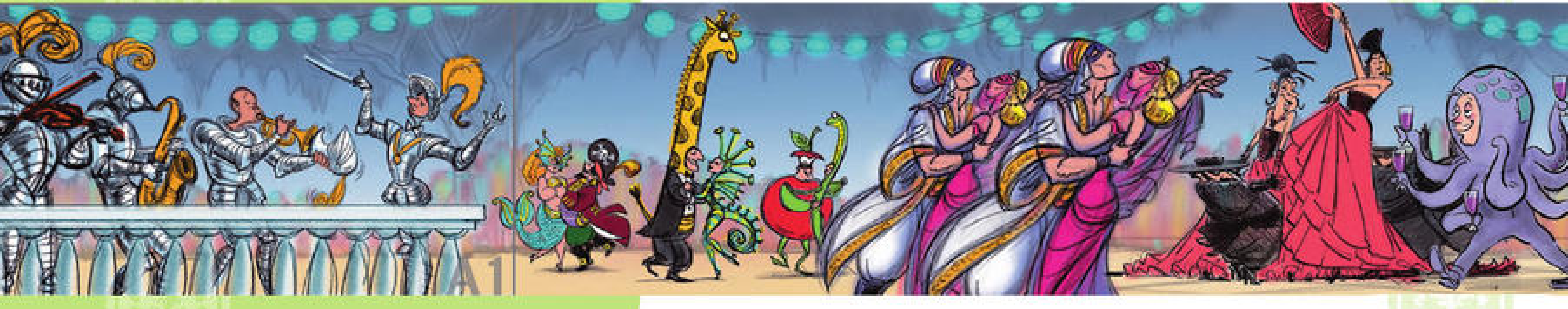
There is a great history and tradition of masquerade parties in New Orleans dating back to 1718 when the French began holding the celebrations, but the most renowned party givers are the New Orleans krewes. (Krewes are private social clubs, first established in 1857 with a secret society called the Mystick Krewe of Comus.) The parades of Mardi Gras are sponsored by the krewes, and these krewes hold exclusive, members-only costume balls.

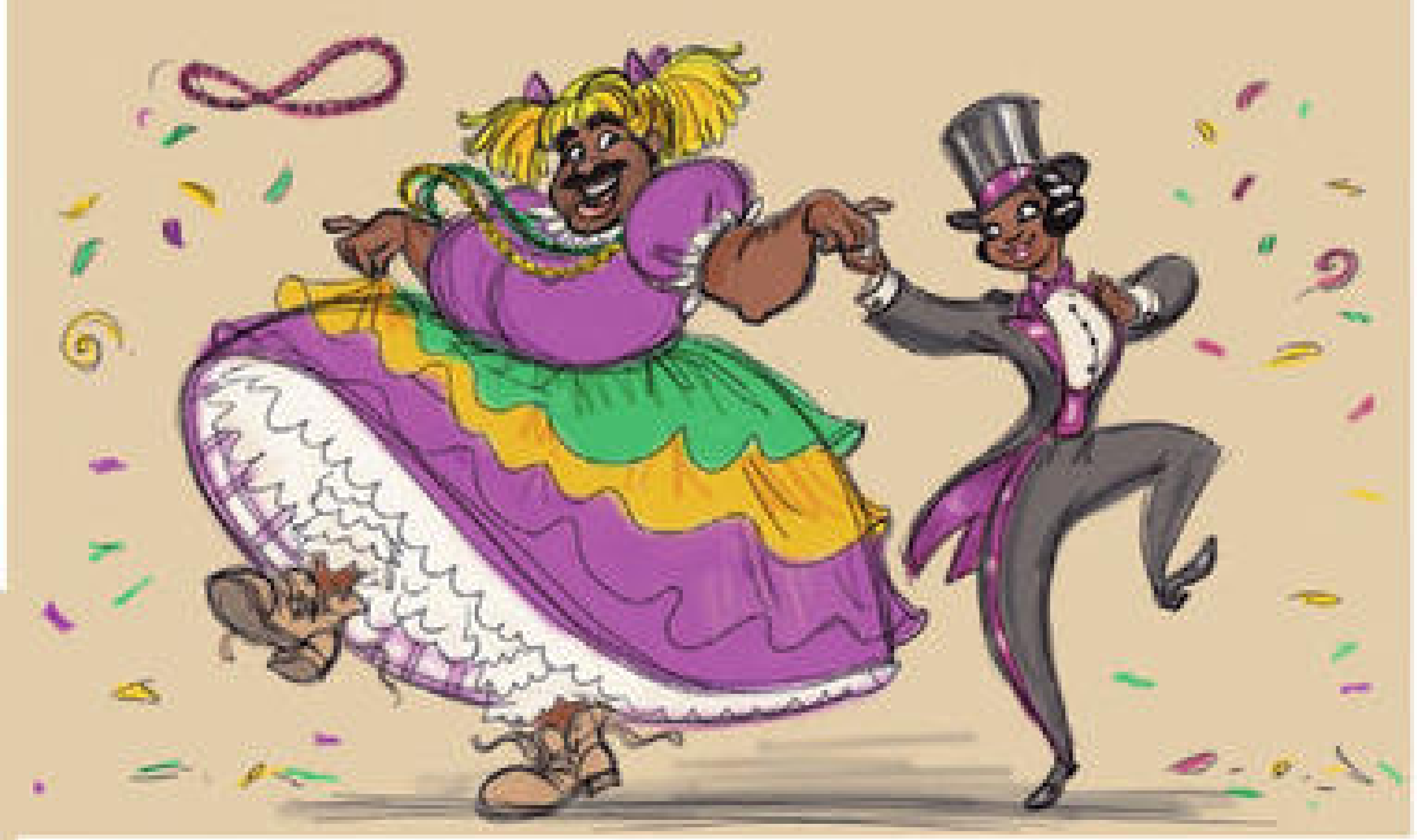
This festive, mysterious, indulgent, and boisterous surrounding provides a perfect setting for the most soulful yearnings of the human heart to be wished into being. Within this setting, as throughout the entire story, the filmmakers create a sophisticated palette of color and light to enhance the audience's understanding of and appreciation for their tale.

James Aaron Finch | digital

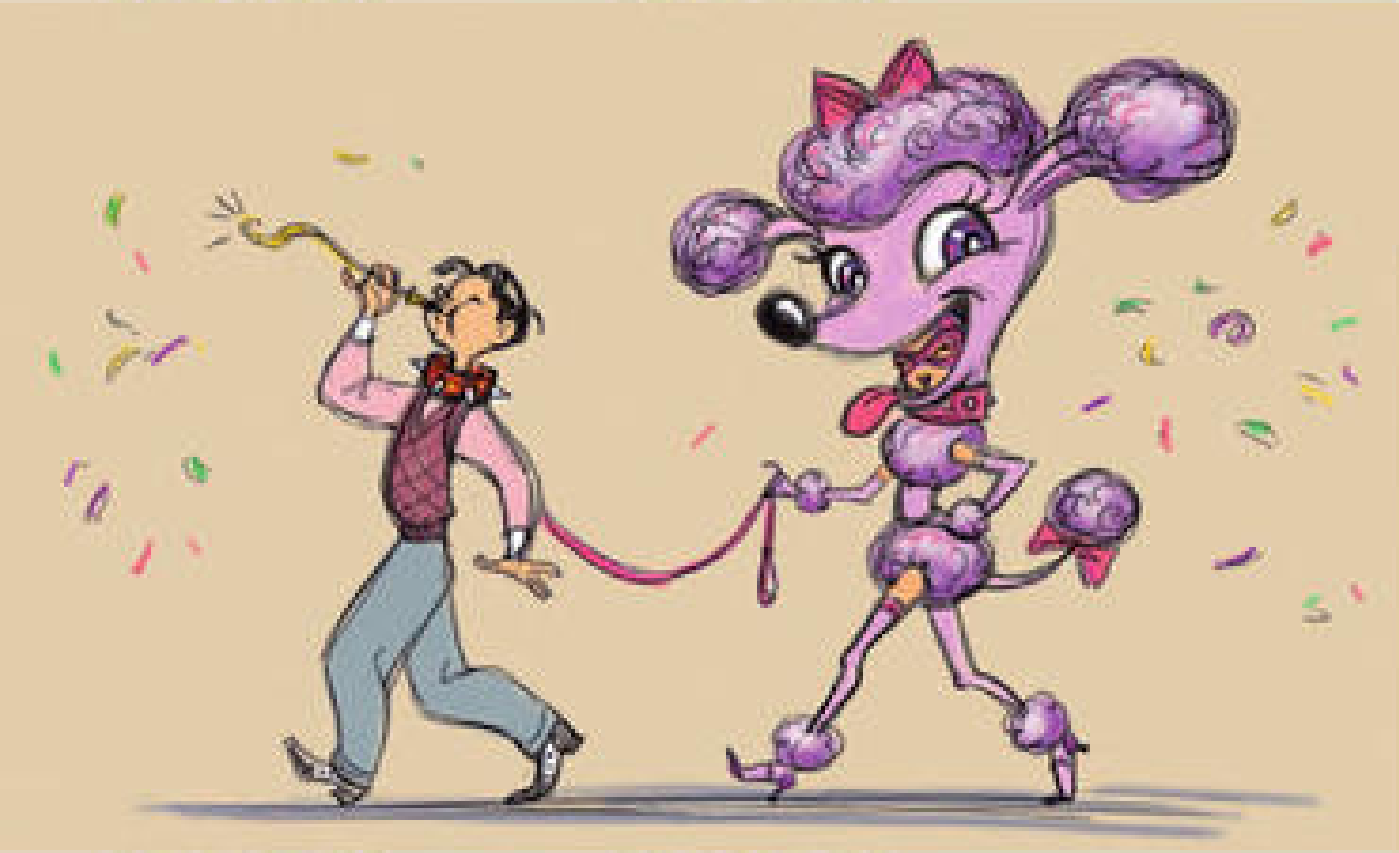


James Aaron Finch | digital

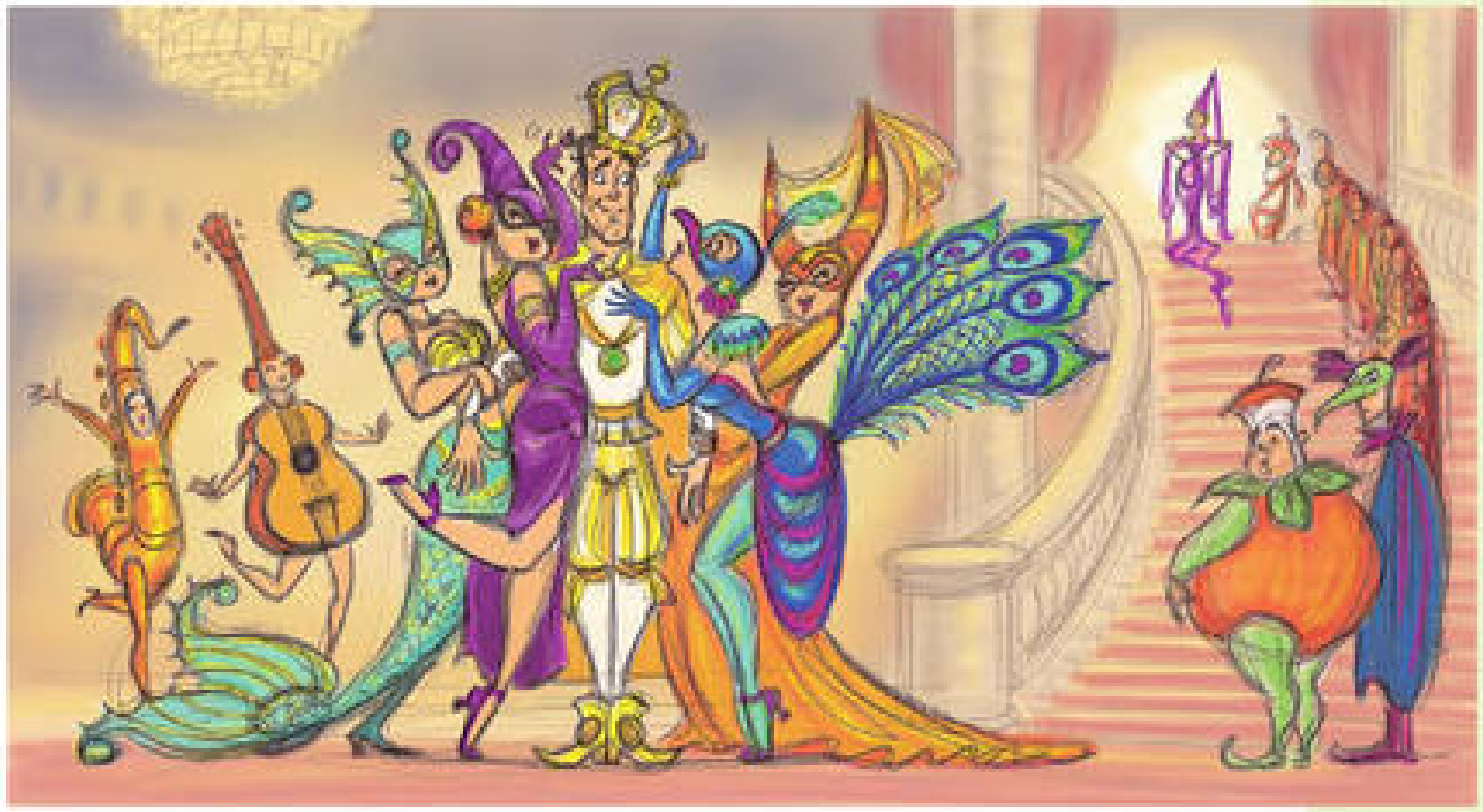




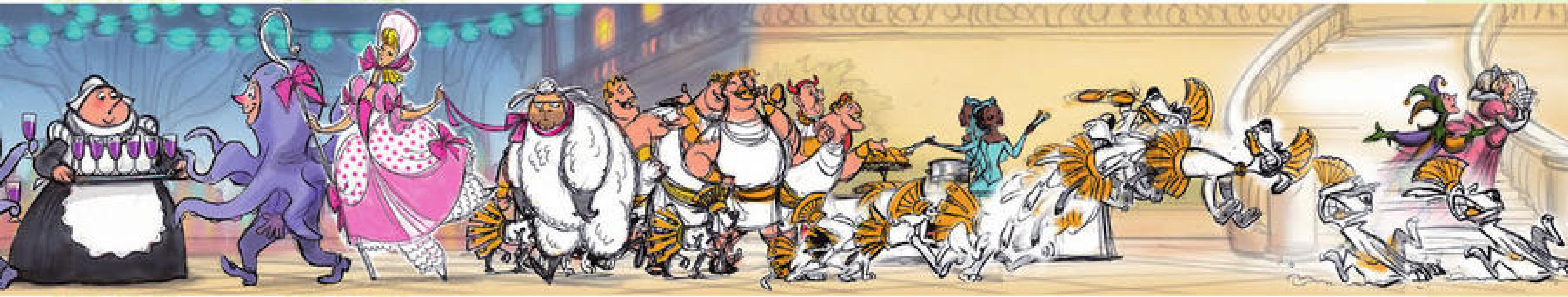
Kevin Gollaher | digital



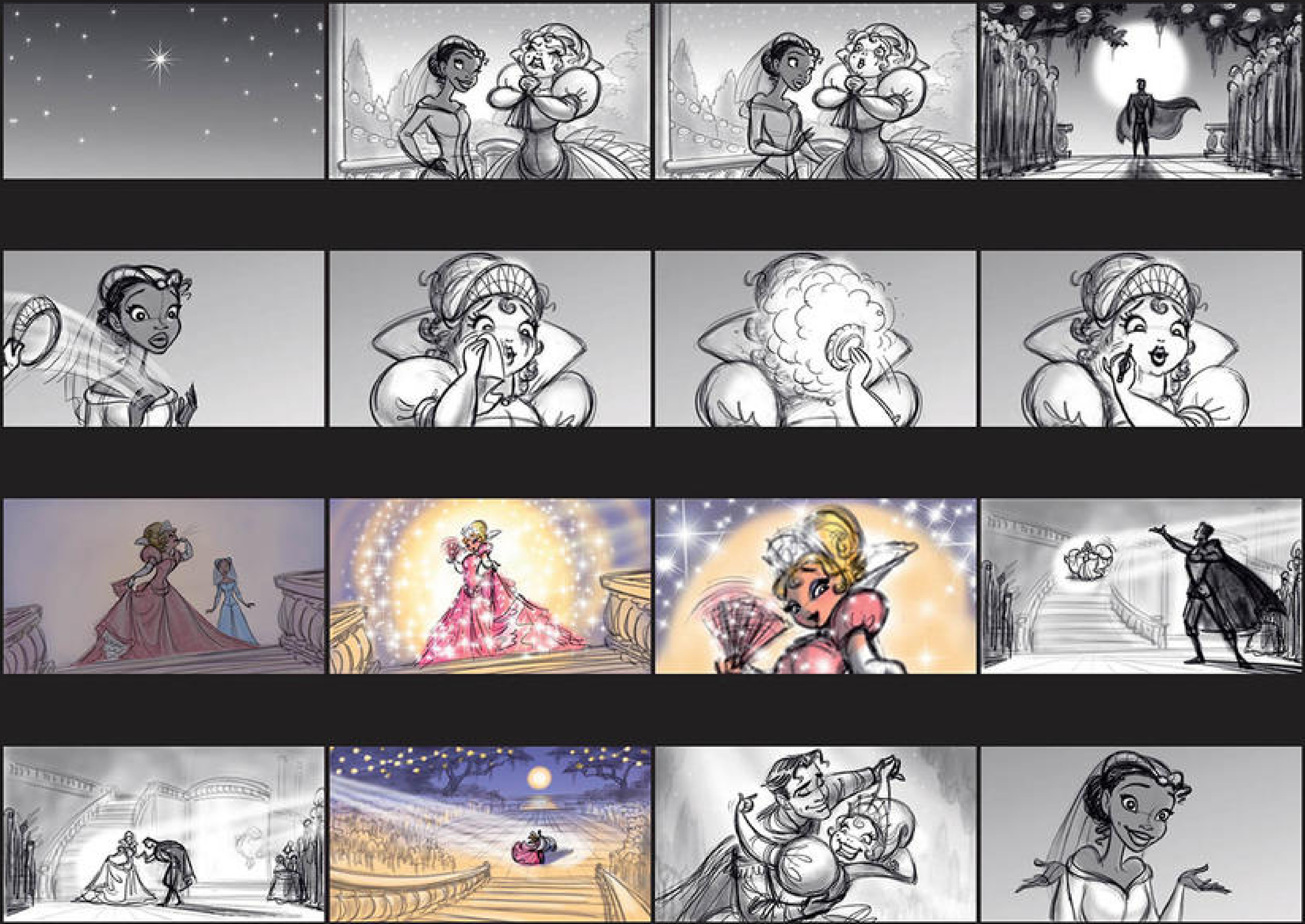
Kevin Gollaher | digital

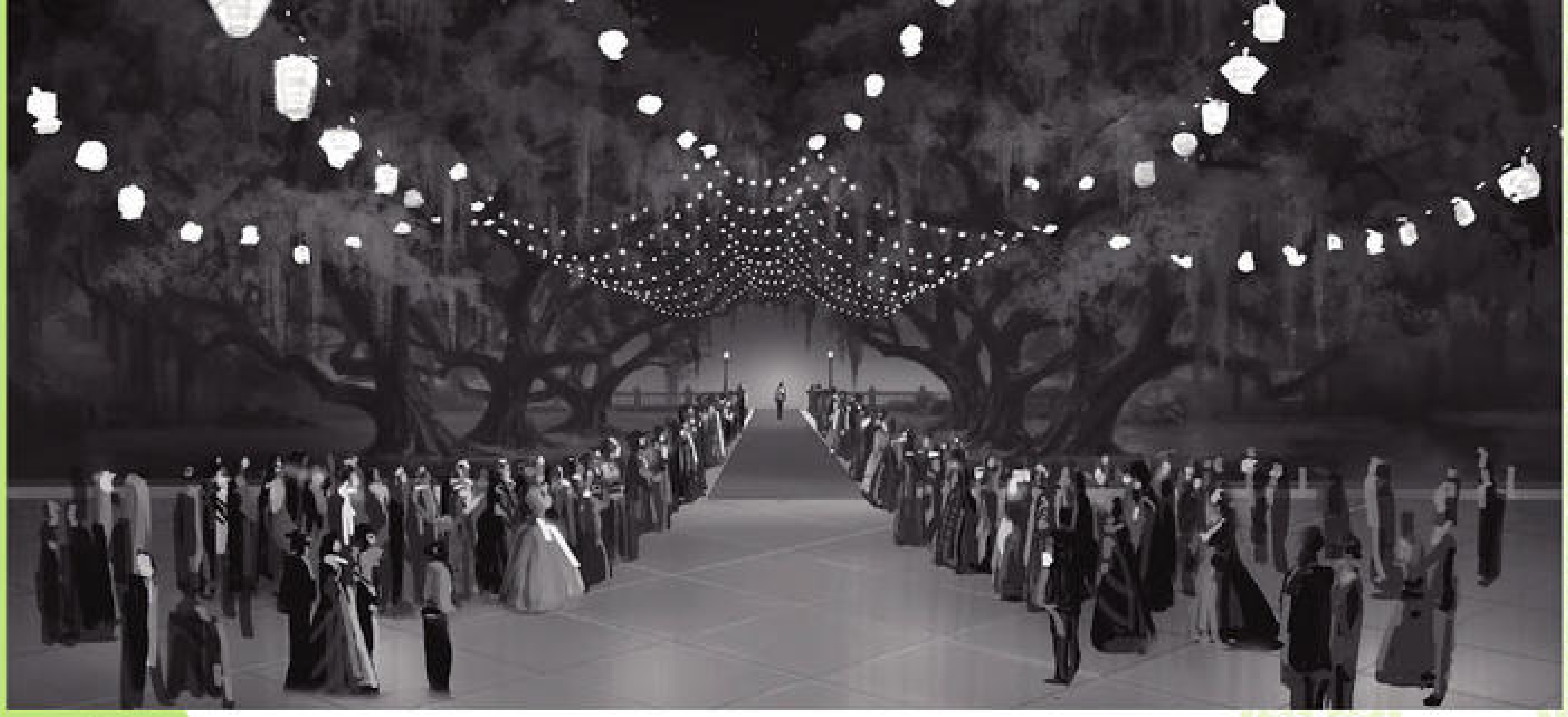


Kevin Gollaher | digital



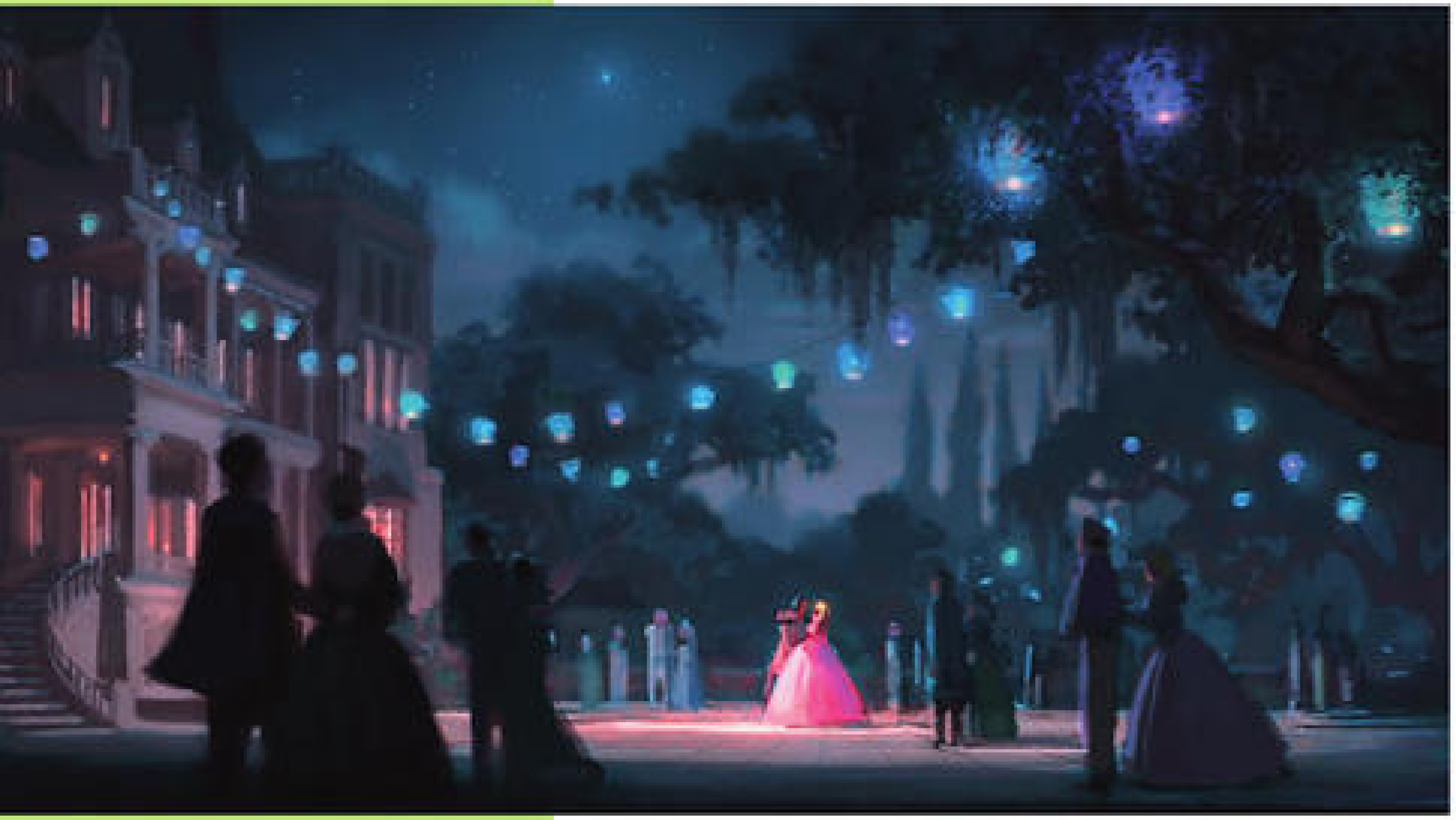
Kevin Gollaher | digital



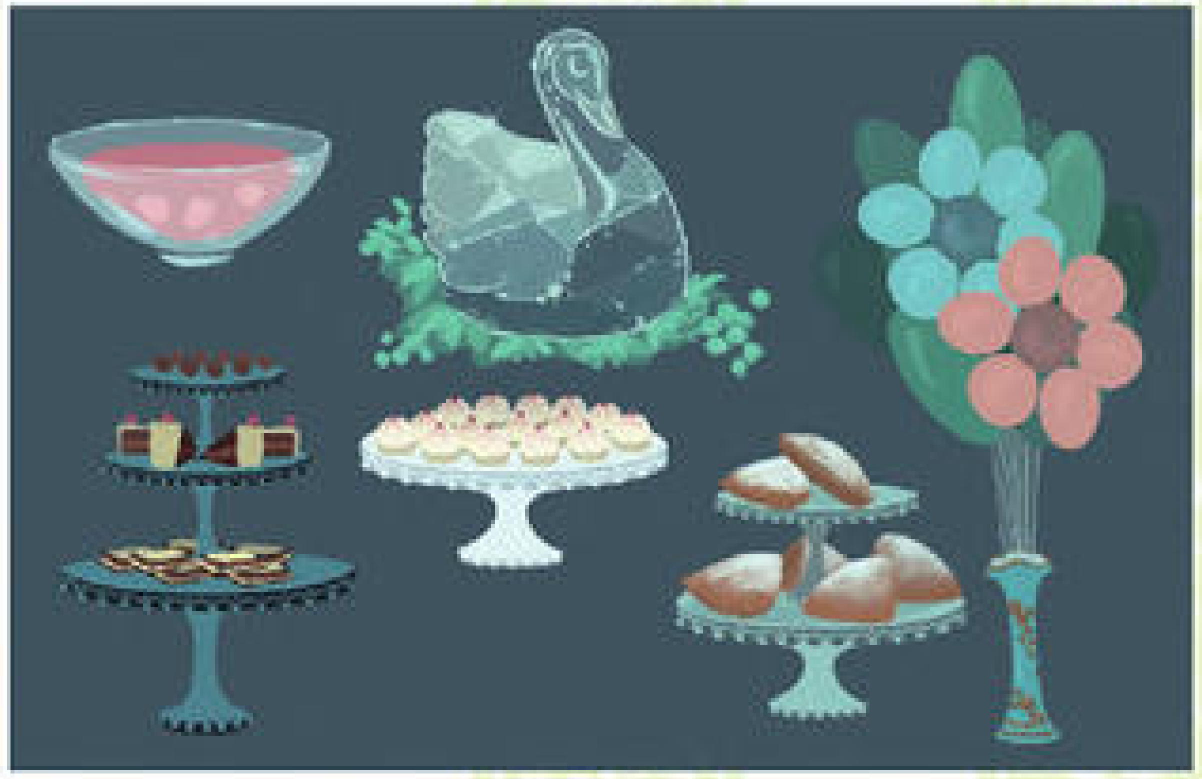


James Aaron Finch | digital

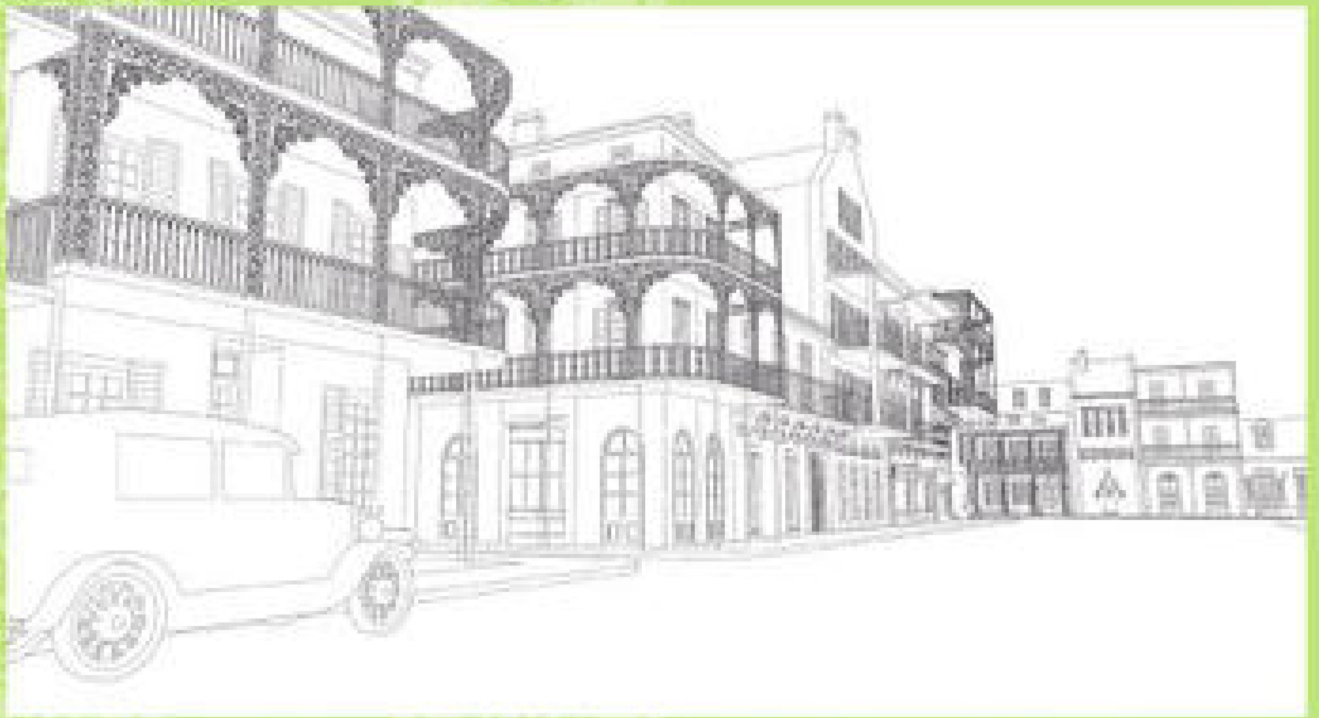
"I love using color schemes since they can help bring ideas to a scene. At the Masquerade Ball, there were so many characters that I proposed using a color scheme for the background characters based on a green, brown, and blue palette. It really helped make Charlotte's pink dress pop instantly."
—LORELAY BOVE, visual development artist



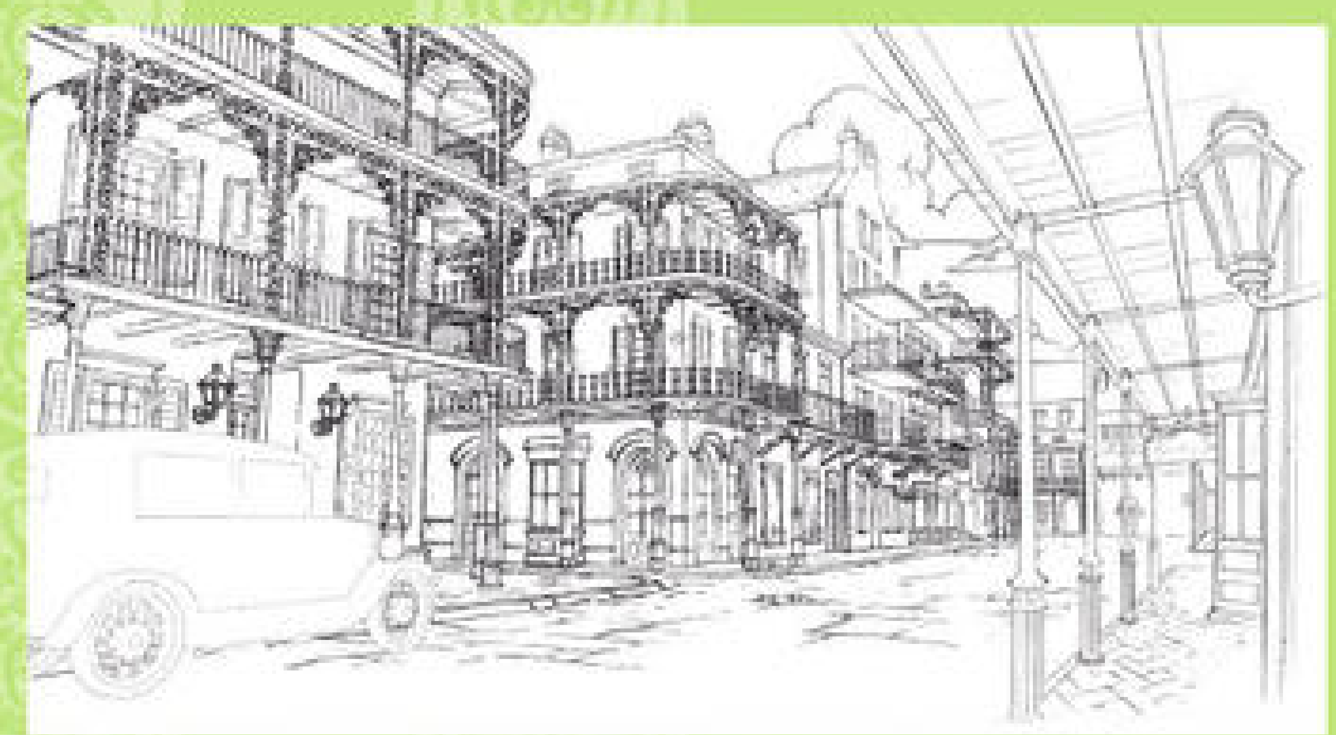
Ian Gooding | digital



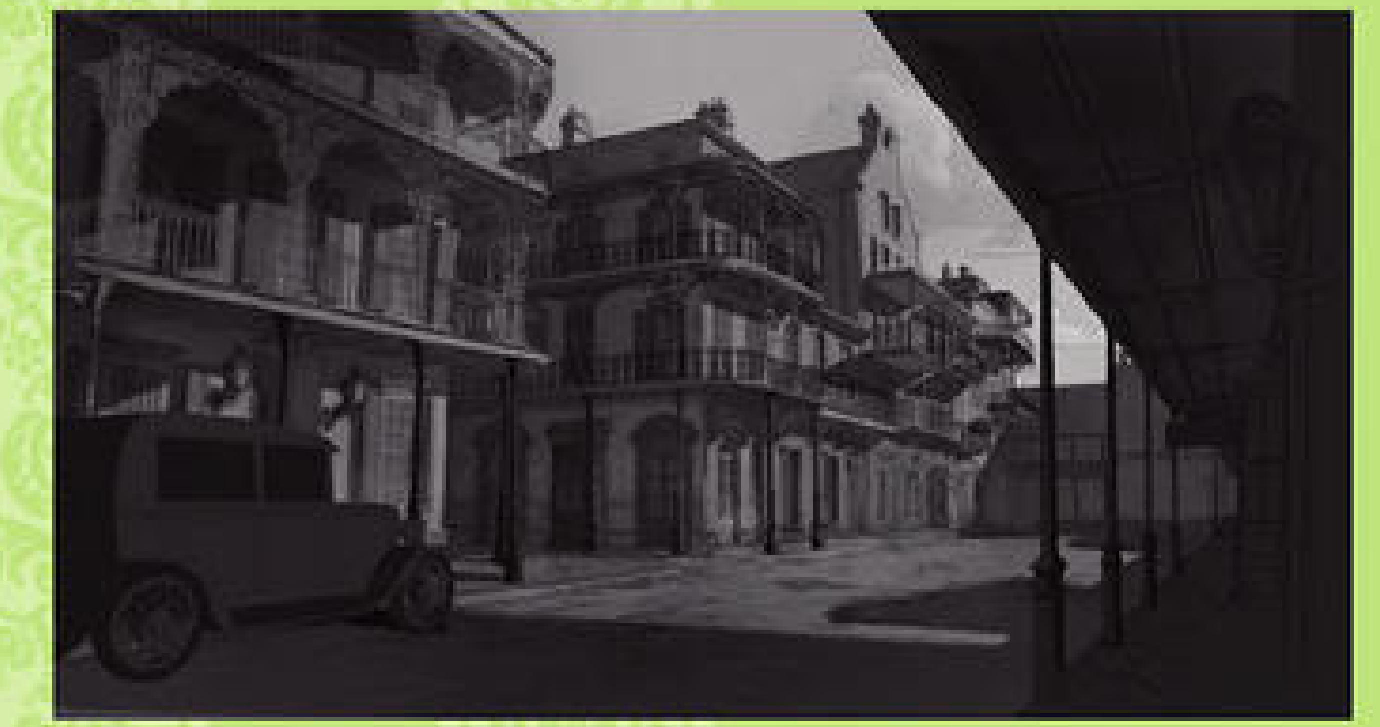
Lorelay Bove | digital



CG Modeling | Jon Krummel | digital



Clean Up Layout | Benoit LePennec | graphite

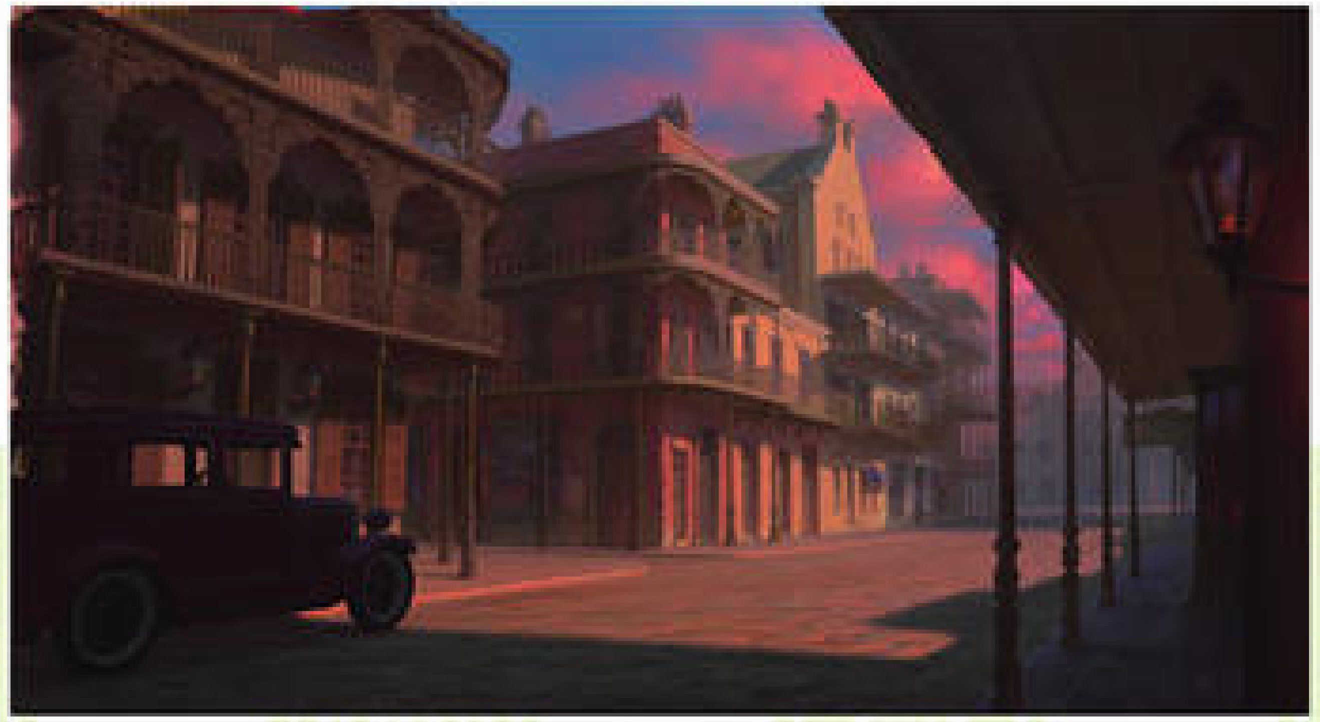


Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani, Lam Hoang (final) | digital

THREE-DIMENSIONAL ASSIST

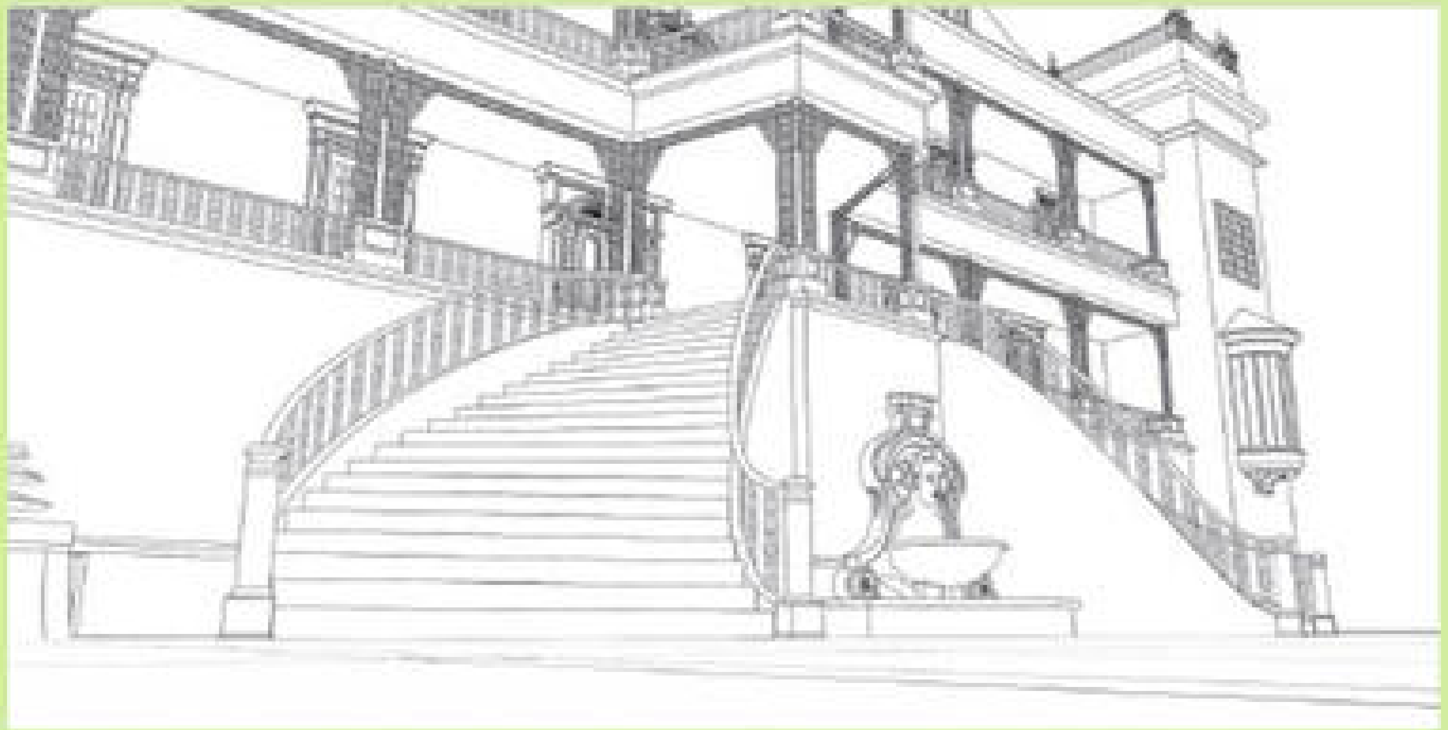
"Because of all of the complex architecture, we are doing 3-D layout reference in a huge way," says visual effects supervisor Kyle Odermatt. However, special attention was given to keeping the visual styling strictly two-dimensional in appearance and feel. "There is that integrated approach here, but we are sticking to a hand-drawn mandate, and what we believe is right for a film in this day and age. We don't want to be a hybrid, and we know there's plenty out there to see if you want to see a 3-D film, but there is a tremendous amount being done behind the scenes.

"Although you will not really see one, there will be a sprinkling of things that change perspective in the film, that are not hand-drawn. It is a 2-D film, but we are generating 3-D assets that are the underlay to that world, and I think that because of that the film will have a real solidity. It influences the art in a way that will make it sit well with modern viewers."

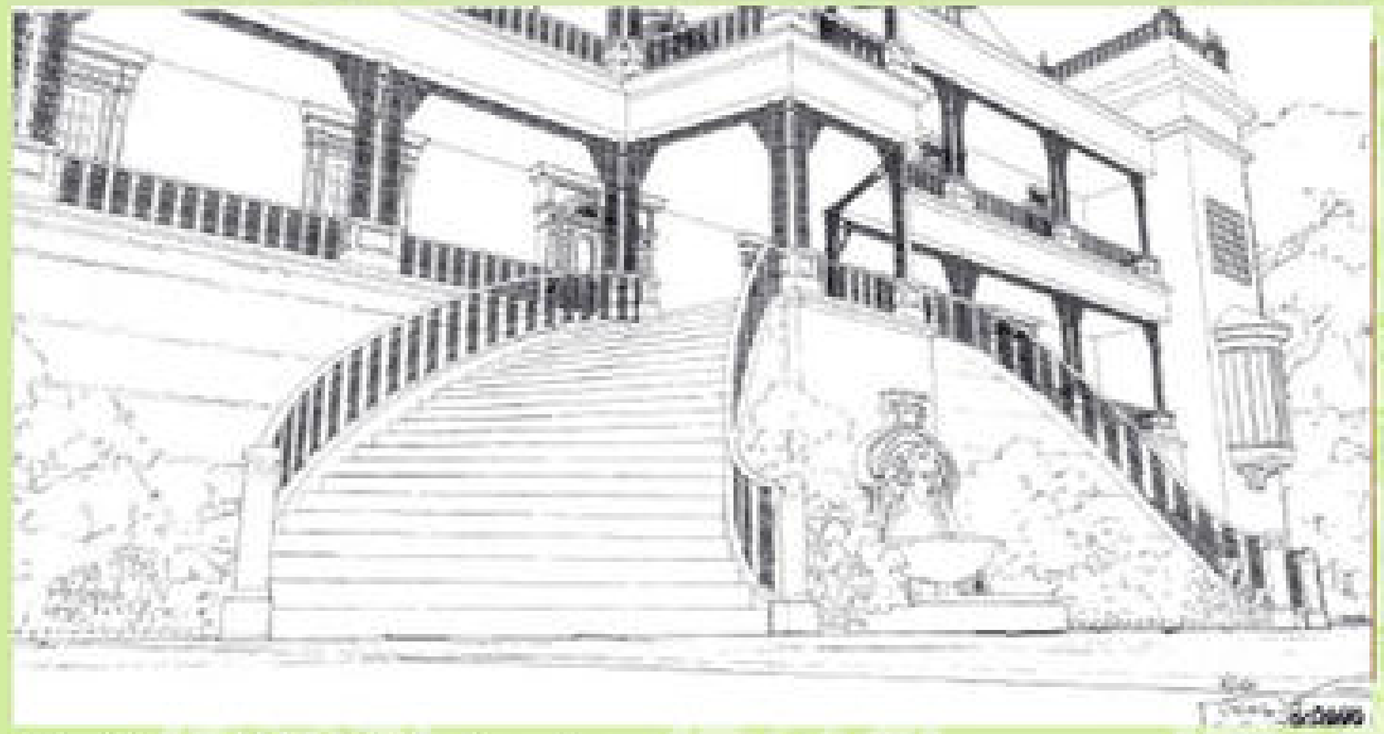


Background | Wei Zhao | digital

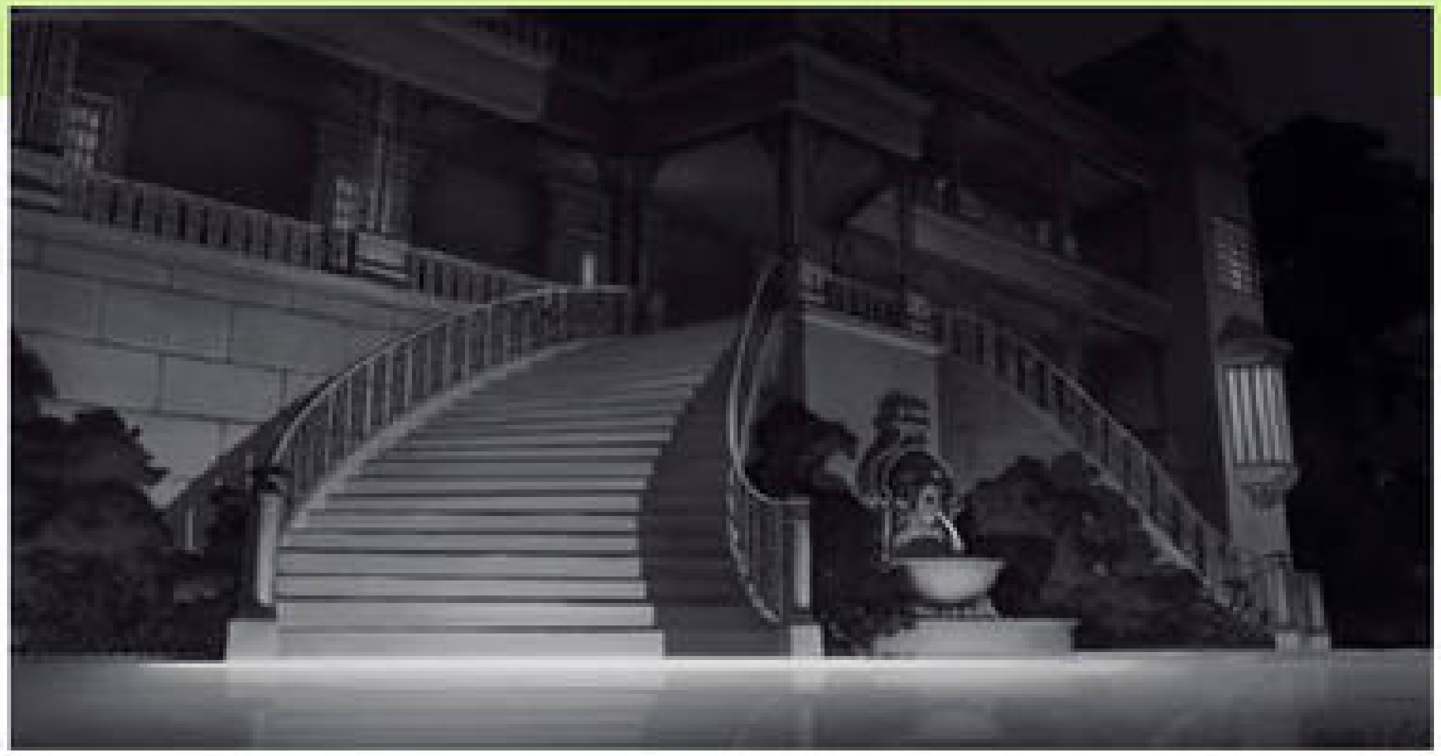
La Bouff Estate



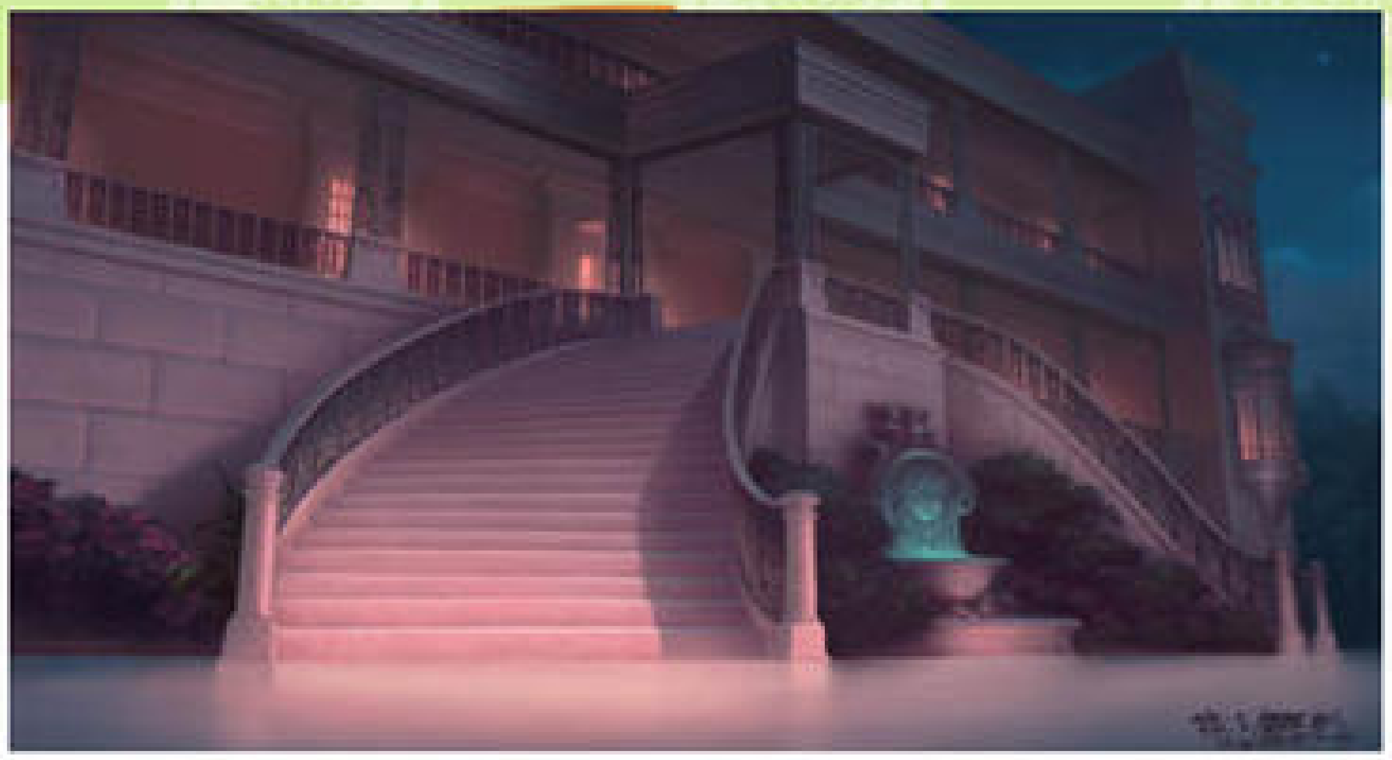
GG Modeling | Jean-Christophe Poulan, Jon Krummel | digital



Clean Up Layout | Robert St. Pierre | graphite

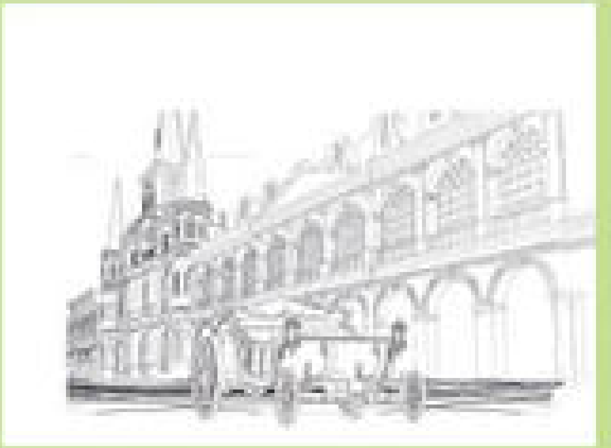


Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani, Yong Zhong | digital

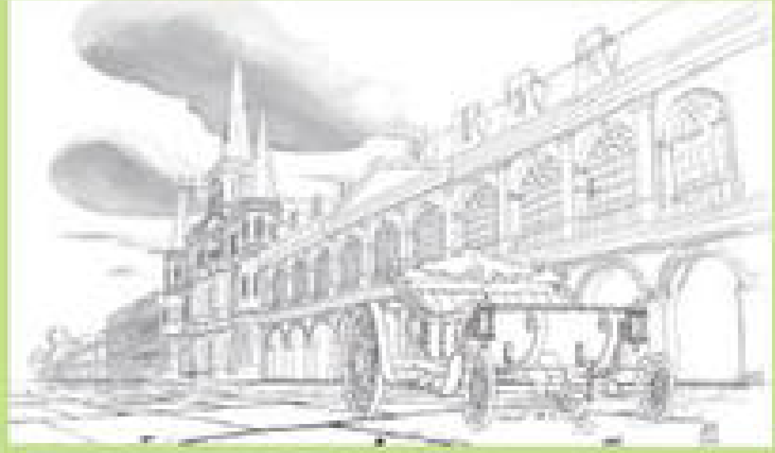


Background | Wei Zhao | digital

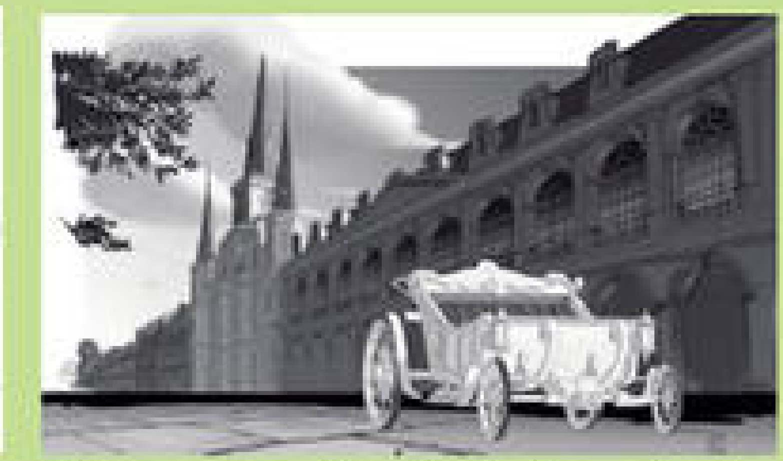
Jackson Square



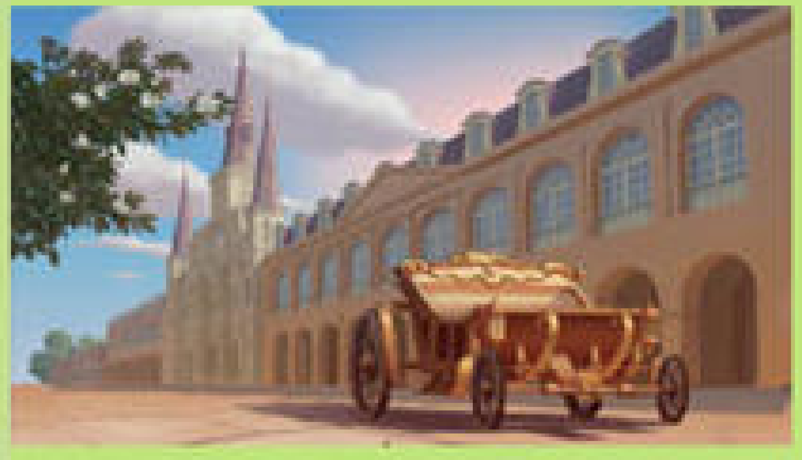
GG Modeling | Yong Zhong | digital



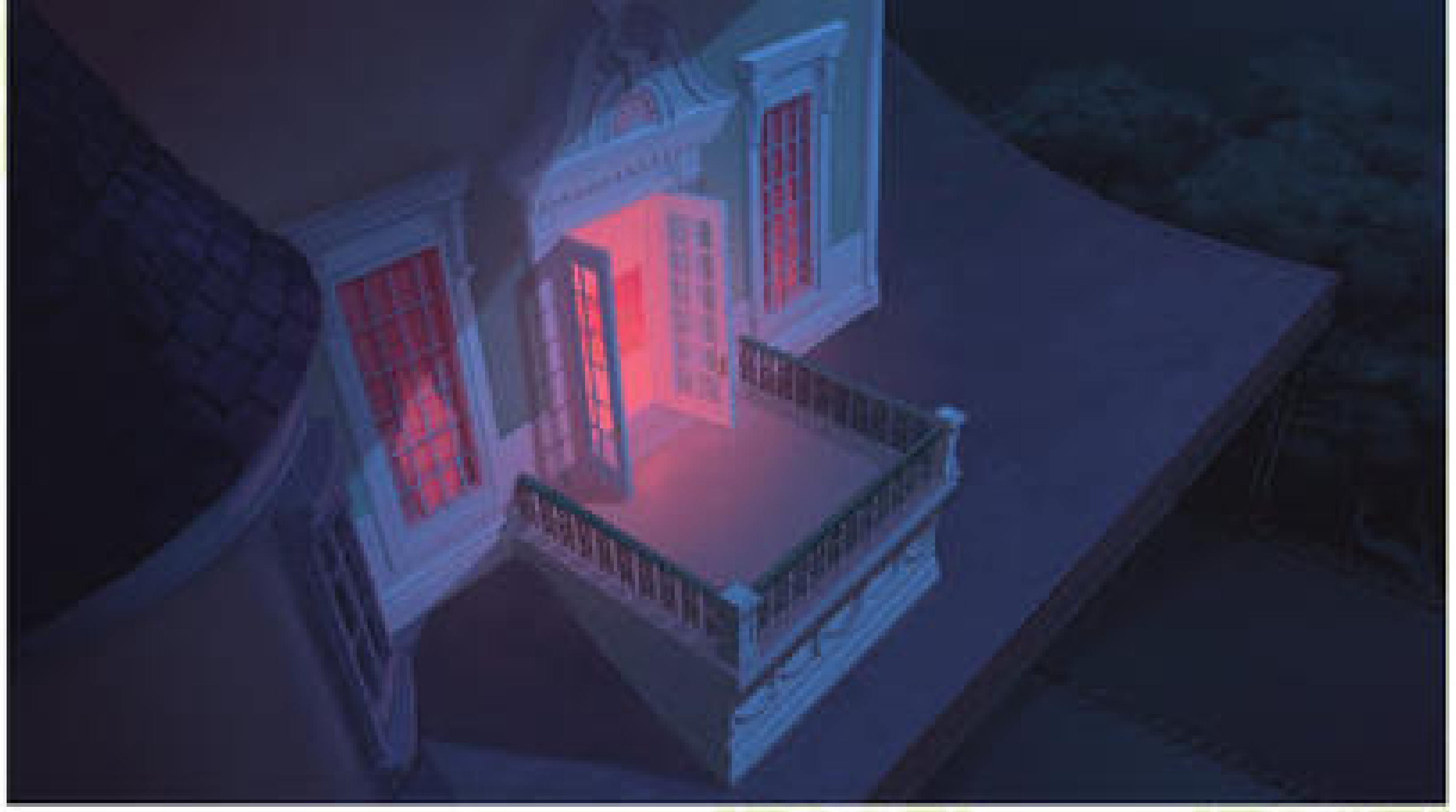
Clean Up Layout | Yong Zhong | digital



Lighting Design |Rasoul Azadani, YongZhong | digital



Background |Doug Ball, Ann Lee | digital



Lisa Keene | digital

COLOR AND LIGHT

"I think one of the reasons why we were trying to avoid a lot of overt 'style' is that it does tend to pull you out of the world of the movie," Ian Gooding says. "The world that you create has to be immersive, and light really helps to do that. So we're trying to create something that's really beautiful and that you do notice, but you don't engage on an intellectual level of 'I wonder why they made that artistic choice?' You engage with it on the level of emotion, and you feel along with what's happening in the environment.

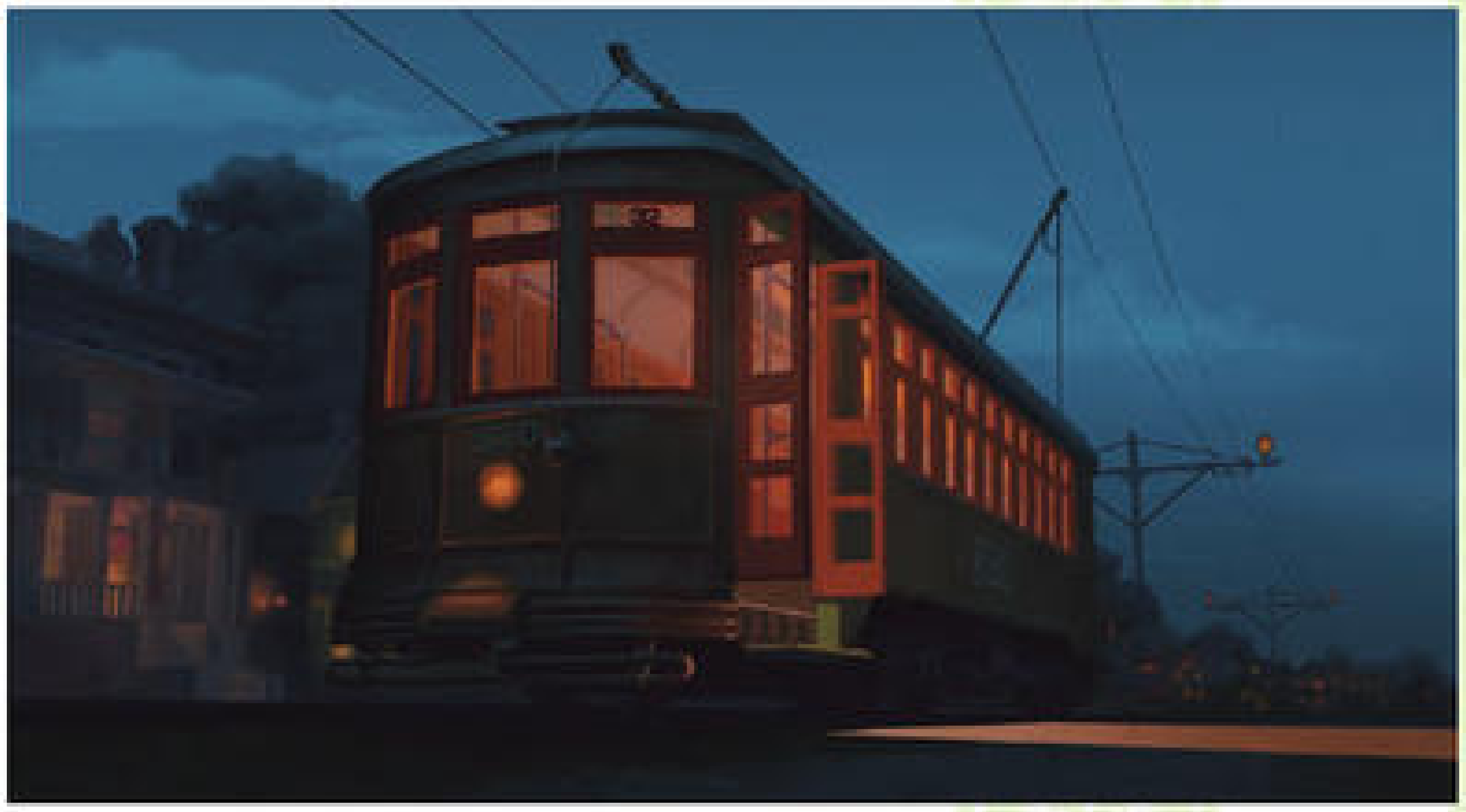
"I'm a huge fan of the Impressionists," Gooding admits. "Their whole lives were devoted to trying to capture light, and the feeling of air between the viewer and the subject. I take a lot of my color cues from those artists, and try and get that *presence*. That feeling that you're being lit by real sources of light. And although it's a little expensive sometimes, I try whenever possible to get things like backlighting in—just things that are about the light, to feel as immersive as we can."

"We have a very strong art director," James Aaron Finch says of Gooding. "He's strong in color, and he's strong in his sense of what feels right. That's a vision that can only be to our benefit."

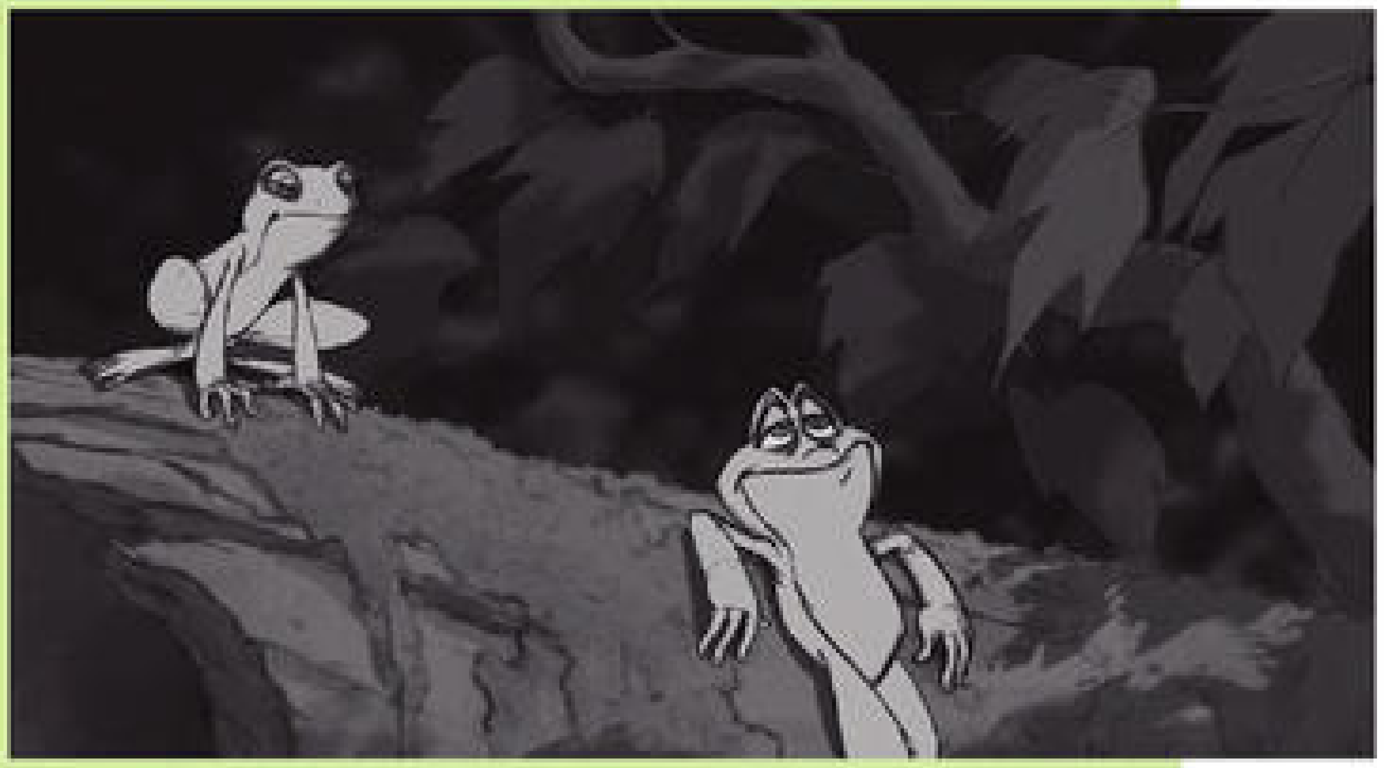
However, even strong guidance and a shared vision don't reduce the complexity of visual design. Head of background painting Sunny Apinchapong elaborates, "We spend a lot of time doing research in my department for lighting and colors for locations. Different teams do different types of research; some are more into details and locations, and others focus on characters.

"We have so many characters, and the amount of research we put in on costume designs—it's amazing that they have come up with so many, in this film more so than any other film I've worked on. It's less complicated with animals. Bambi always looked the same—his local colors are always the same. But humans have different costumes. They change environment, they change characters, and they change situations. That requires so much work!"

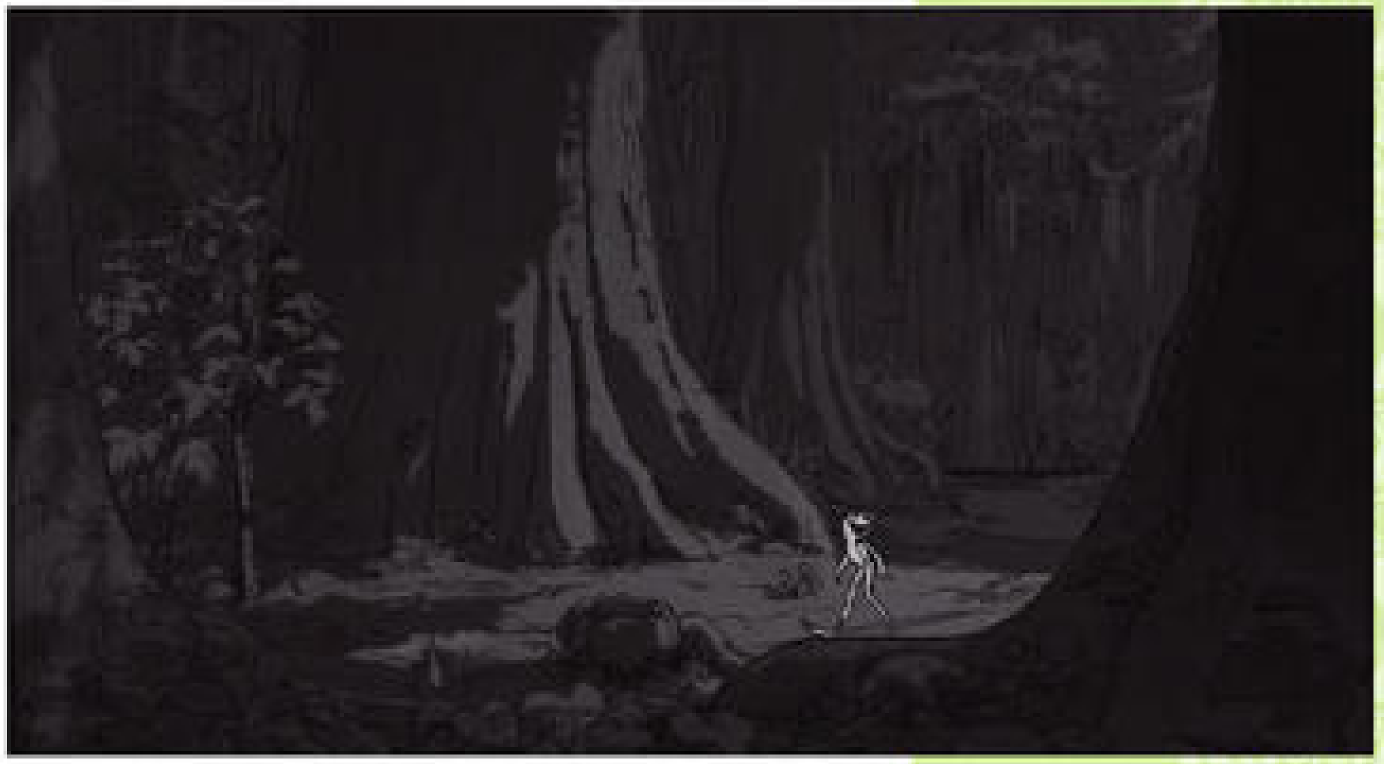
All the effort combines toward one goal, which Gooding has made a mantra for the movie: "We're trying to get our audience to engage with the setting on an emotional level, so that you're not really concentrating on it, instead, just being there."



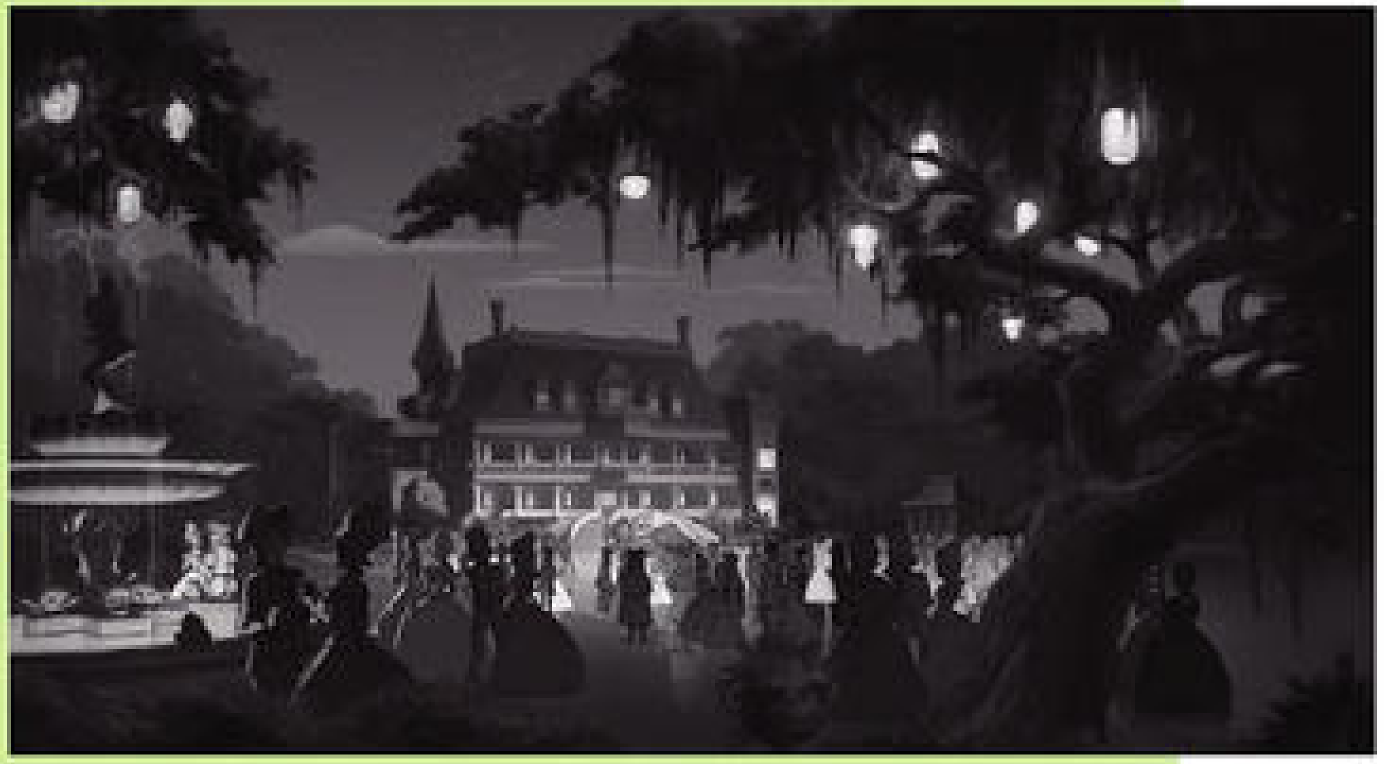
Youa Vang | digital



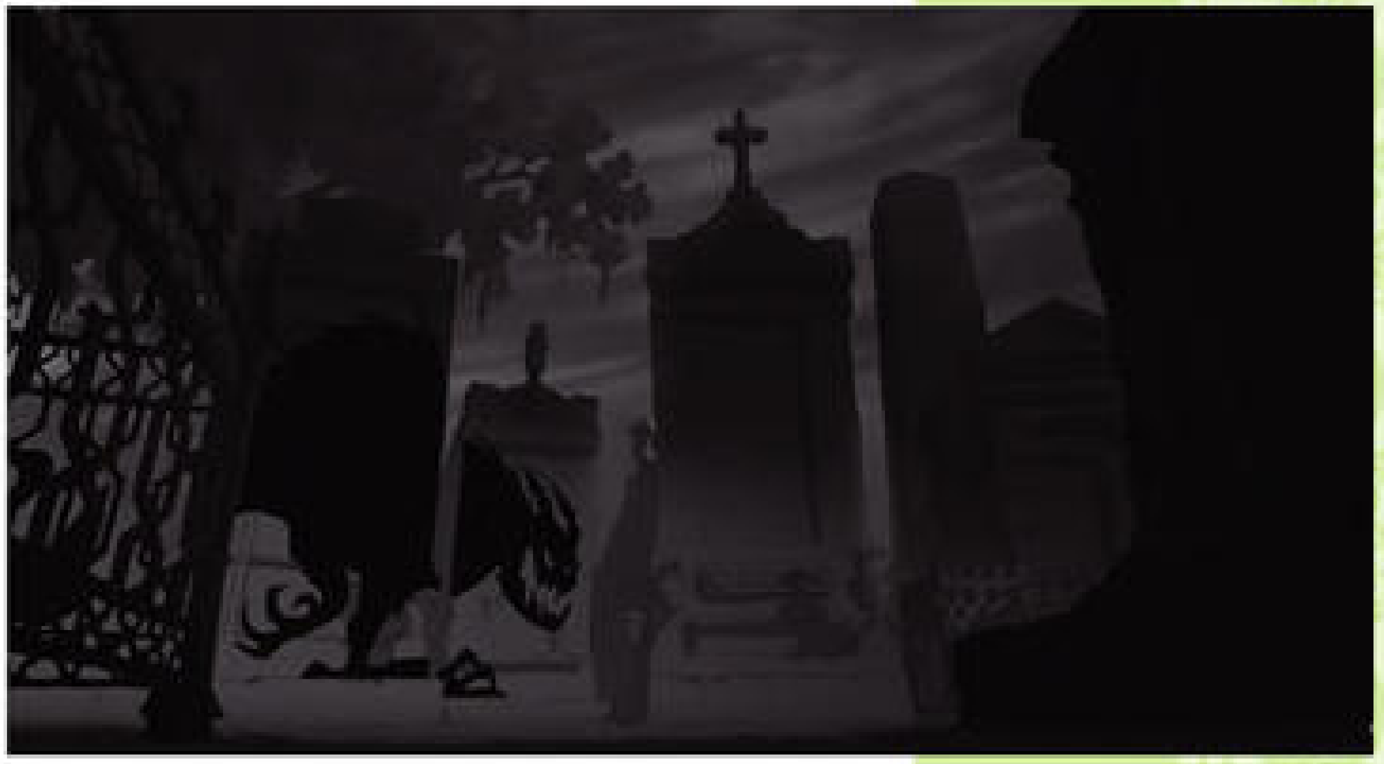
Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani | digital, Drawing | Allen Tam | graphite



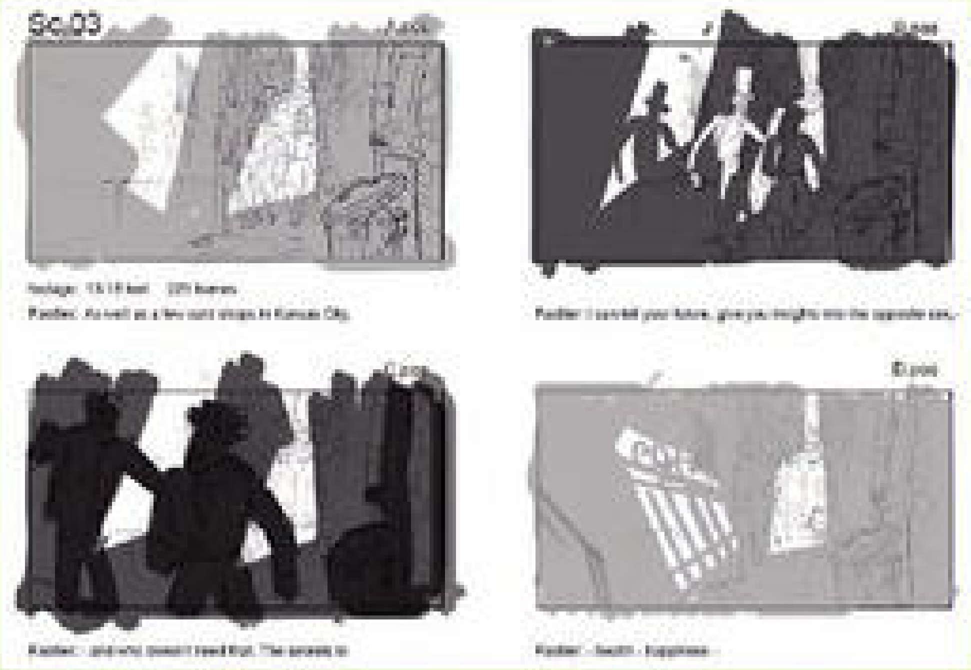
Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani | digital, Drawing | Teps Cruz | graphite



Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani | digital, Final Render | Julio Leon | digital Drawing | James Alles & Allen Tam | graphite



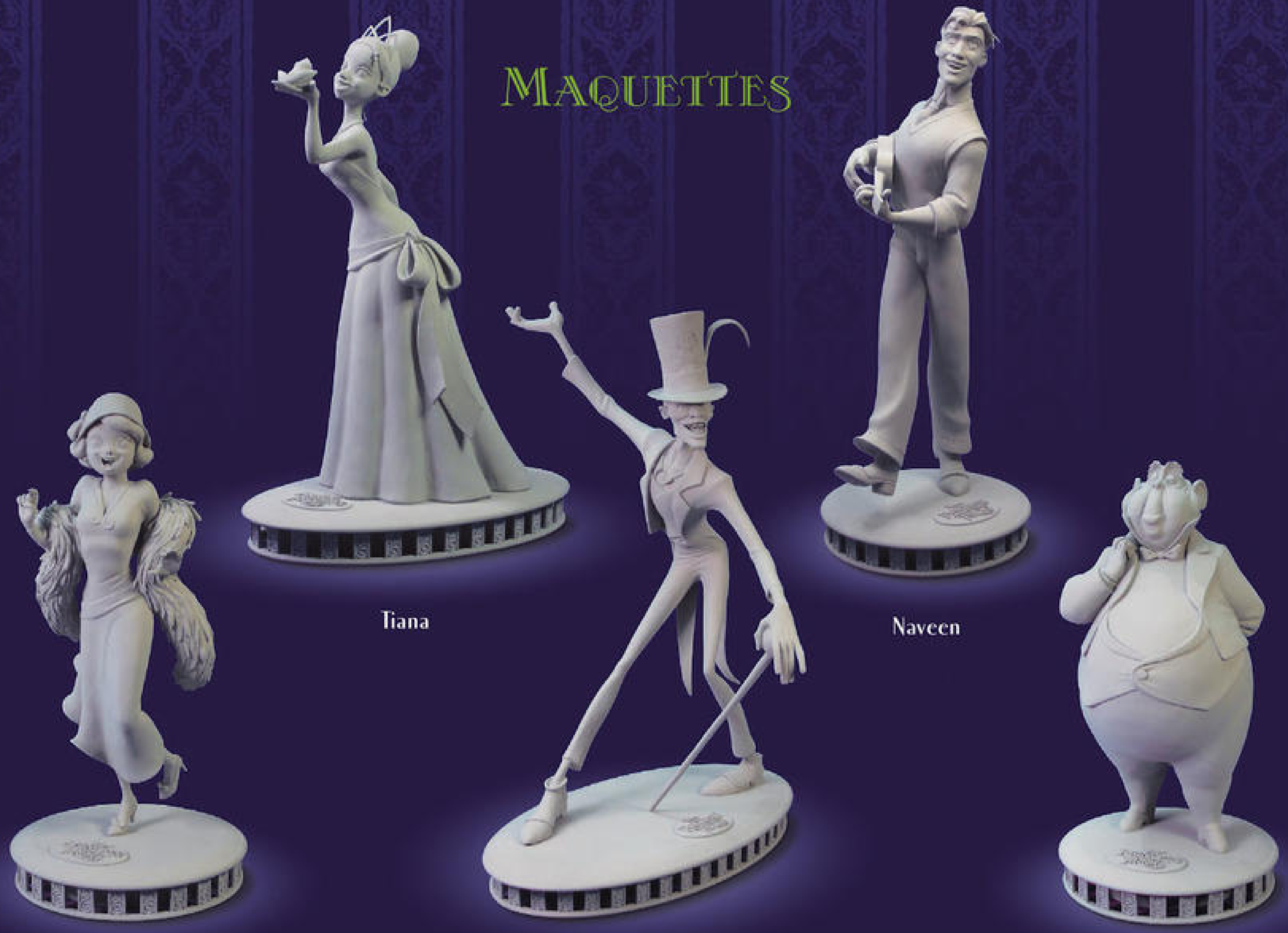
Lighting Design | Rasoul Azadani | digital, Drawing | Teps Cruz | graphite



Light Study | Rasoul Azadani | digital, Drawing | Benoit LePennec | graphite

"For Layout, lighting was one of the most important elements in staging this film. I was trying to keep it simple yet graphic to create different moods for different sequences. As an example, for the cemetery I kept it mysterious and spooky. I used very strong gradation of dark to light with a layer of fog. For the organic areas like the Bayou, I kept it simple and abstract but added detail on top to show a more lush setting."
—RASOUL AZADANI, head of layout

MAQUETTES



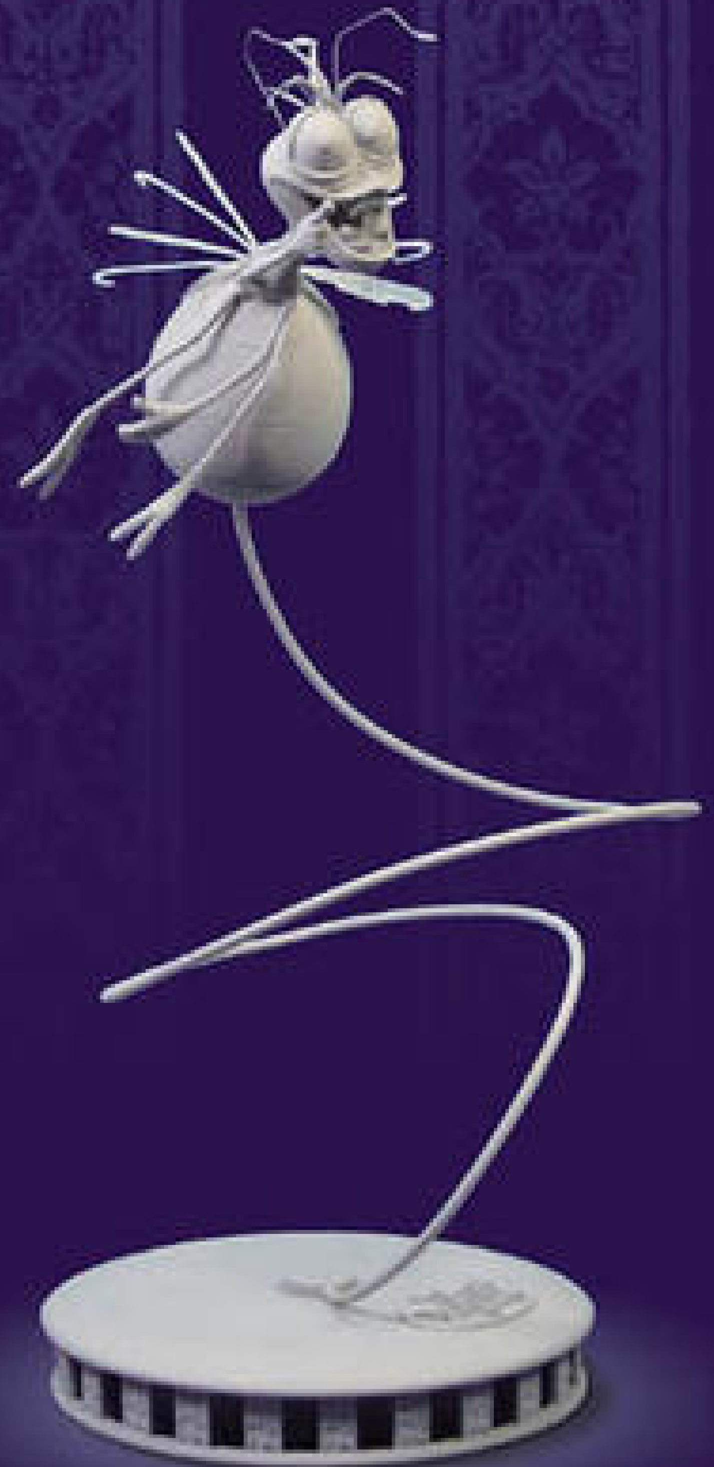
Tiana

Naveen

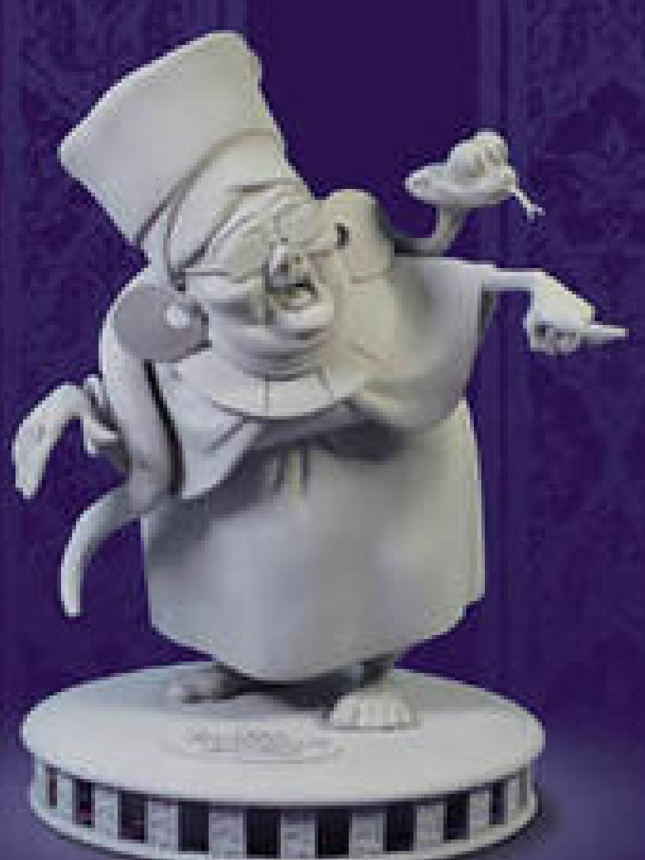
Charlotte

Dr. Facilier

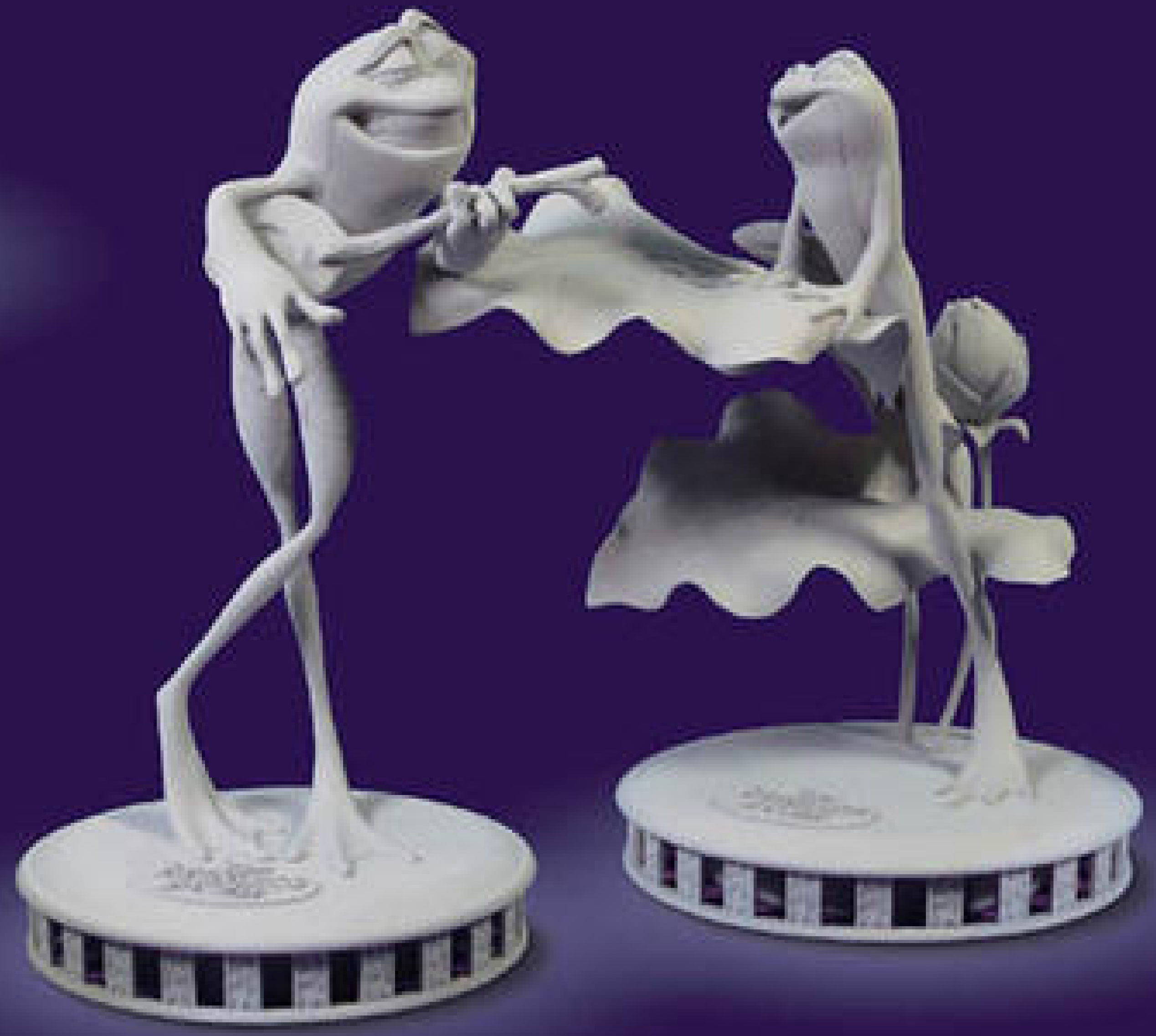
Lawrence



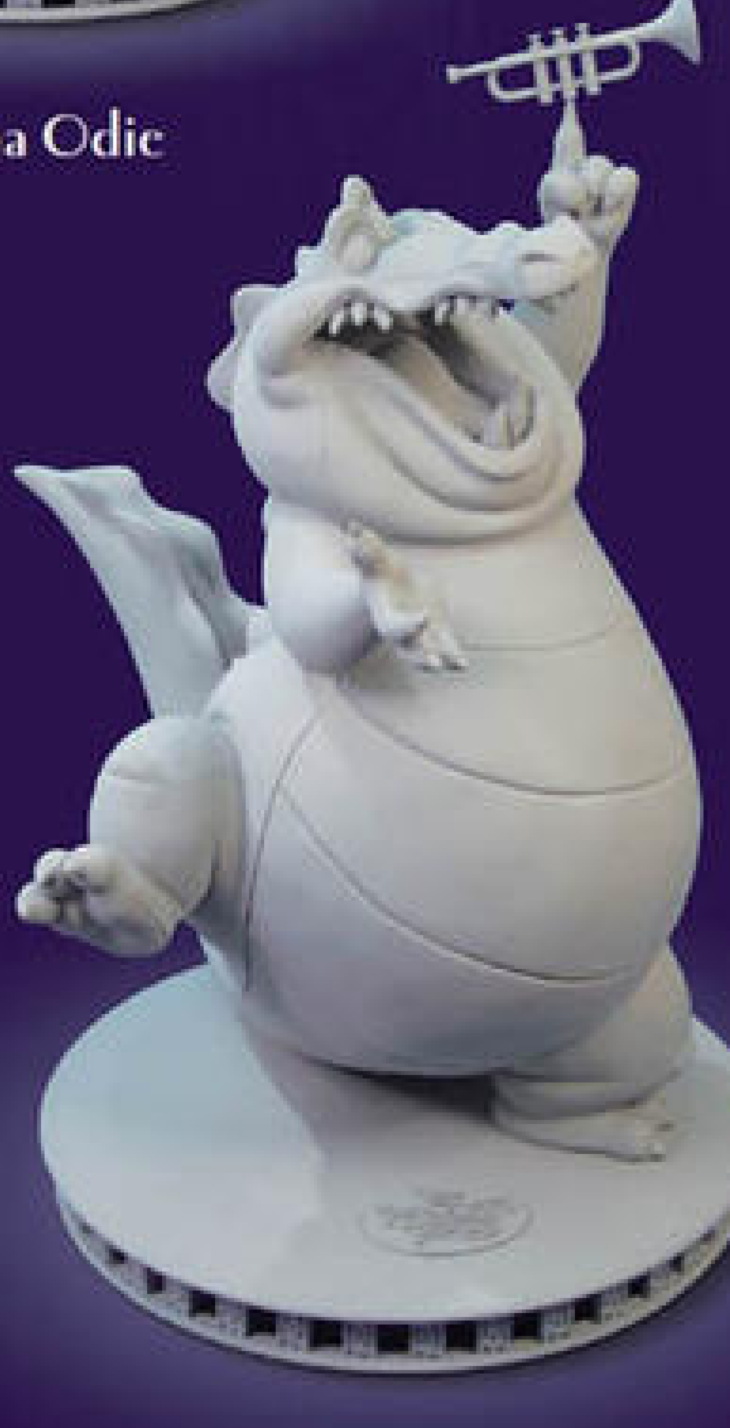
Ray



Mama Odie



Frog Naveen & Tiana



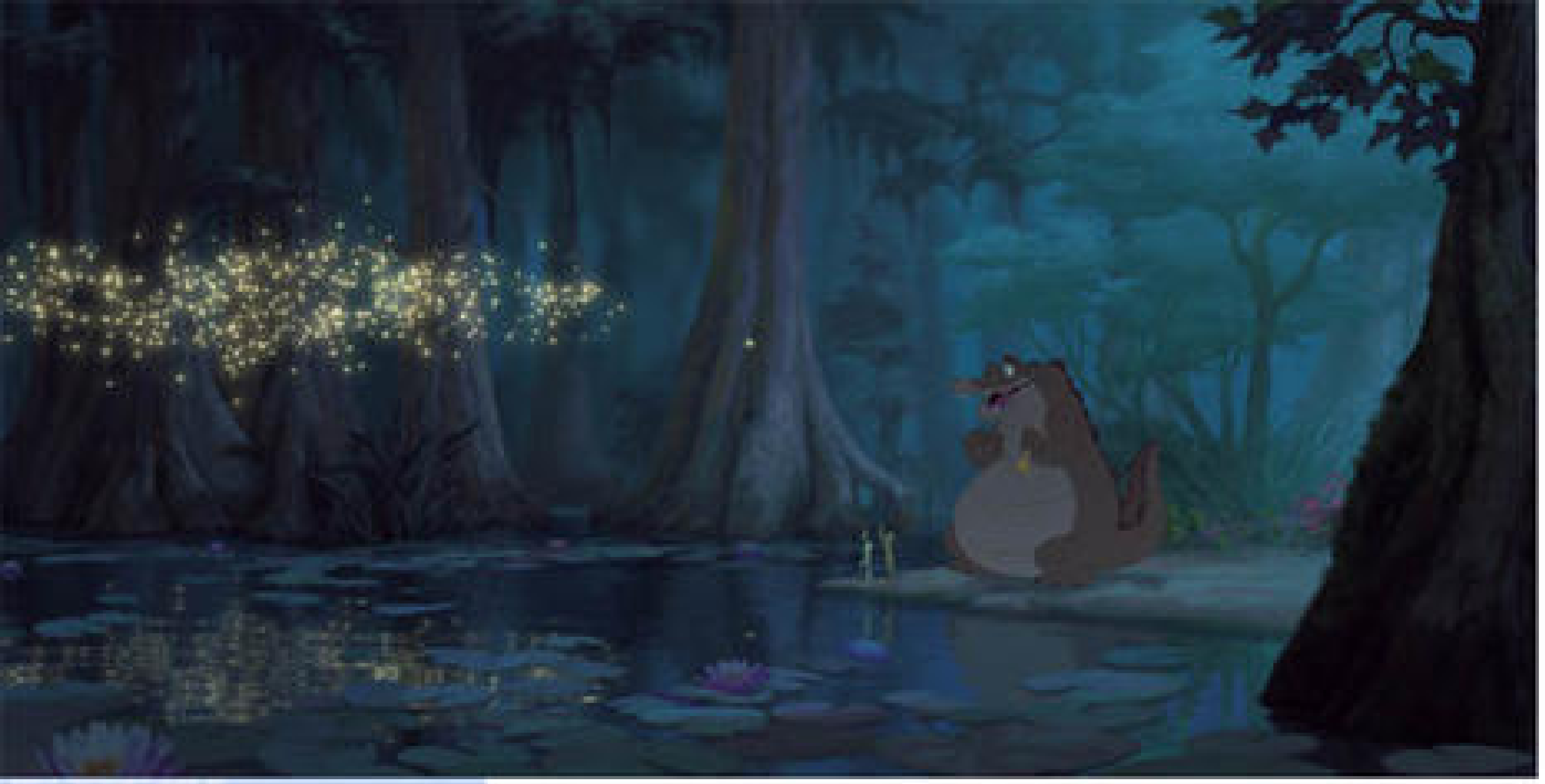
Louis

Ian Gooding | digital

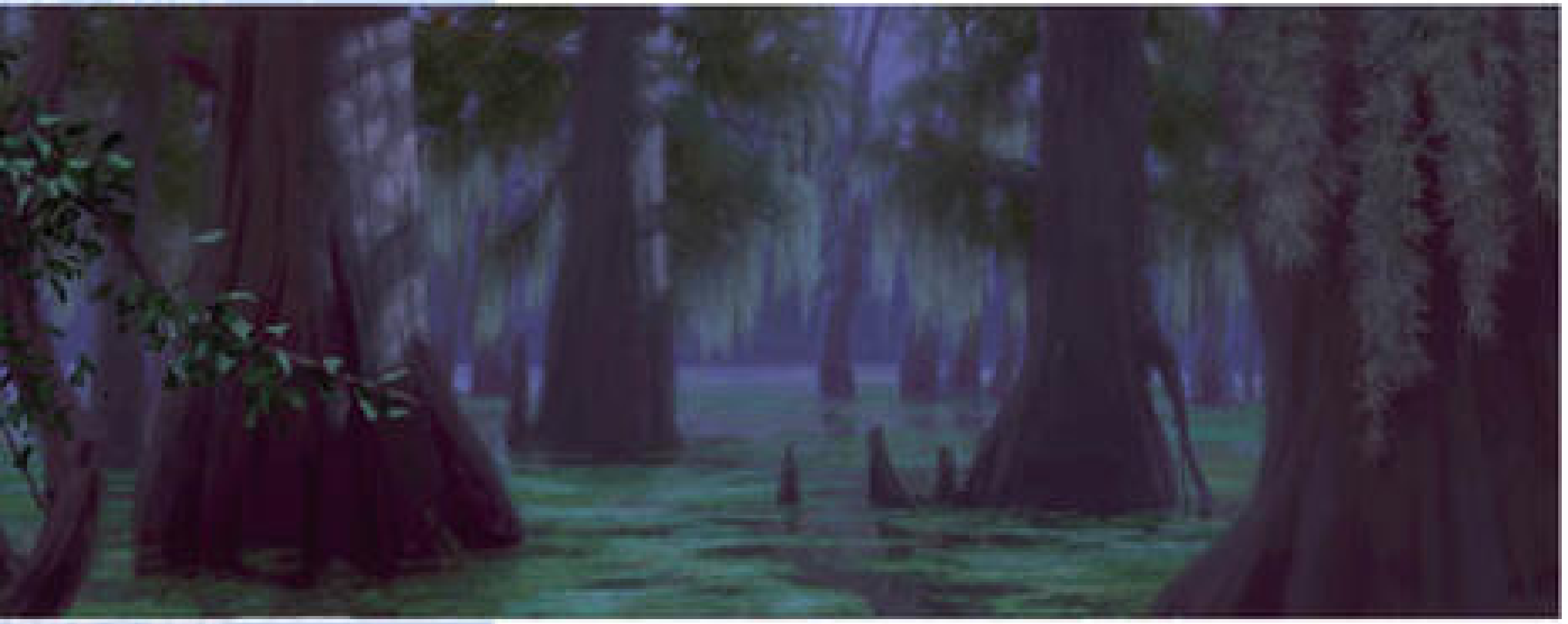
CHAPTER THREE: THE BAYOU

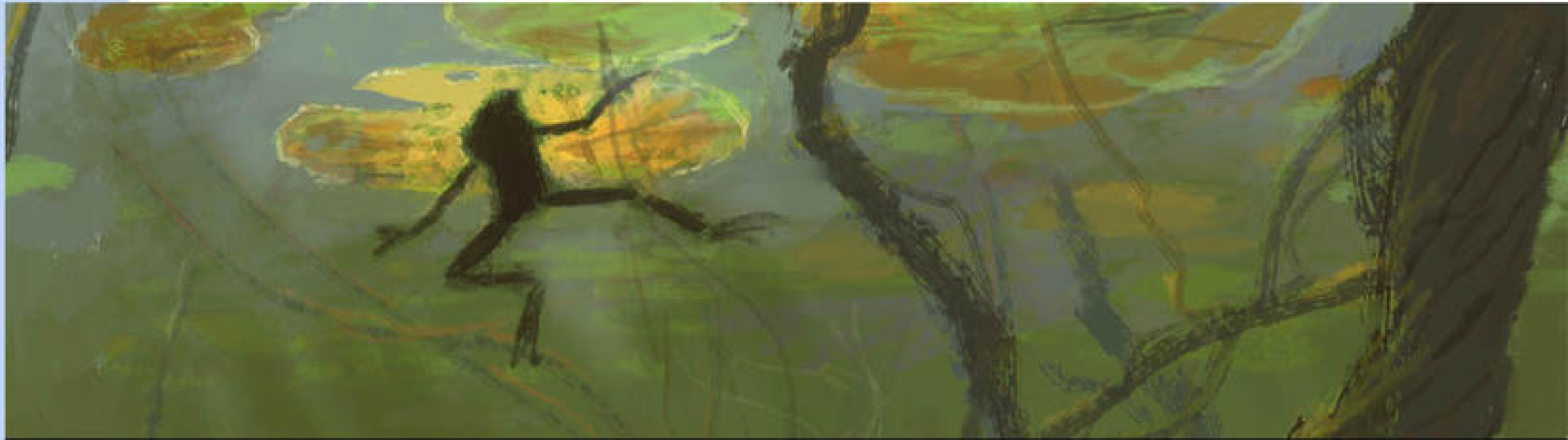
"FACE TRAPPERS AND HUNTERS AND PRICKER BUSHES AND COLD SWAMP WATER THROUGH THE DEEPEST, DARKEST PART OF THE BAYOU"

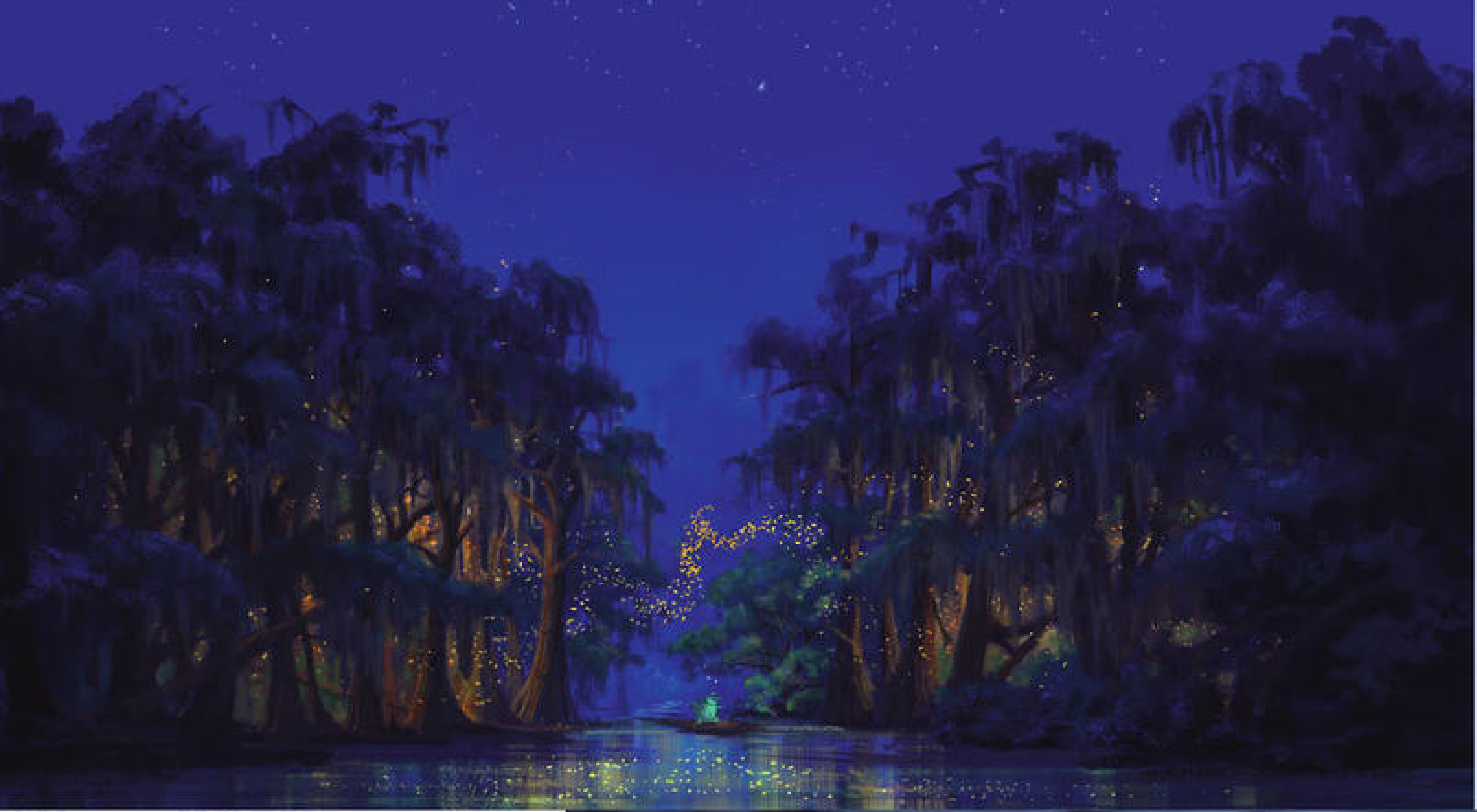
"This movie is challenging in that it has such different environments. You have the French Quarter, and the wild, colorful Mardi Gras, and the polished sophistication of the Garden District—and then you have the Bayou."
—MARIA GONZALES, head of color styling & compositing



THE BAYOU

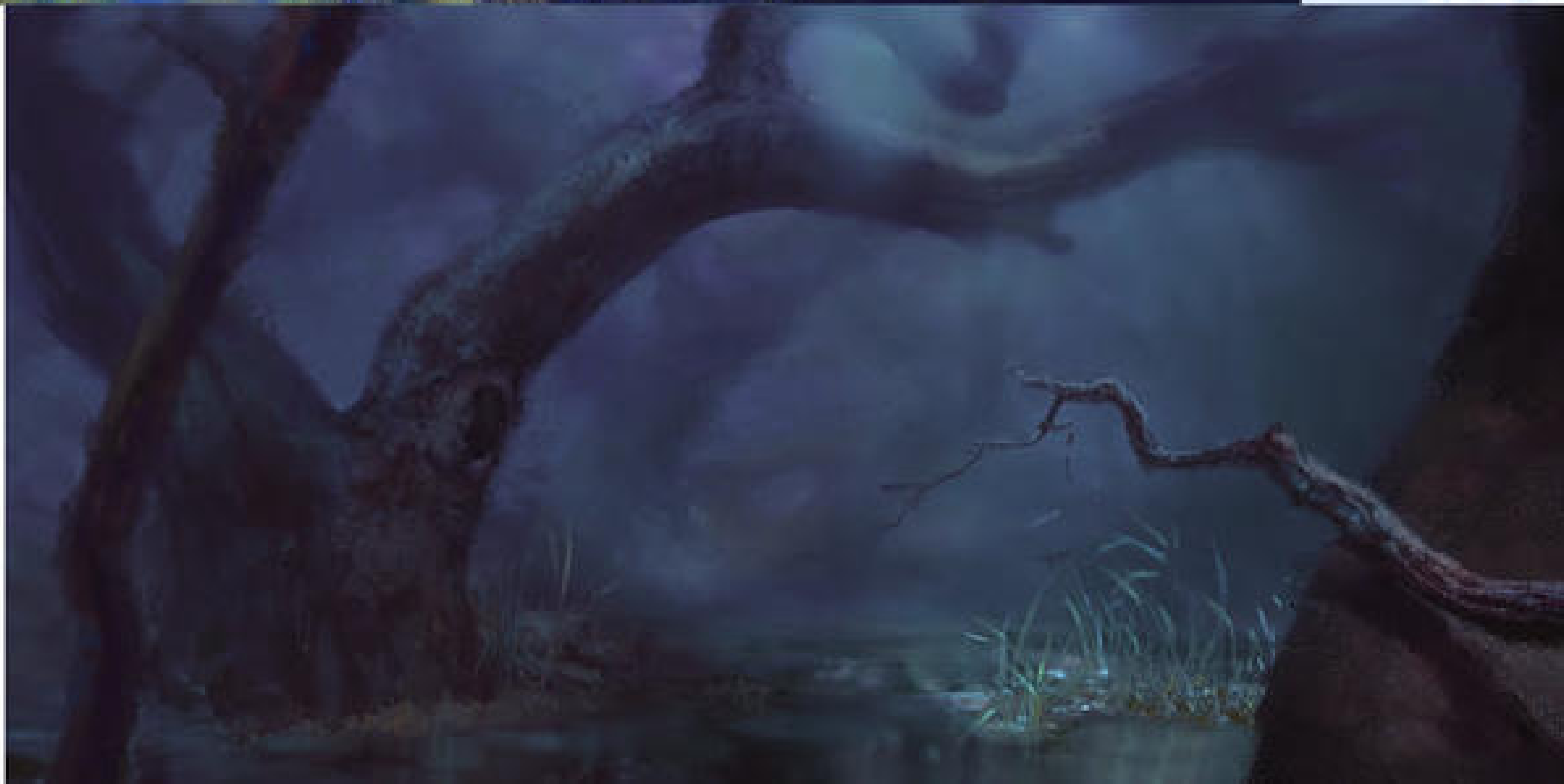




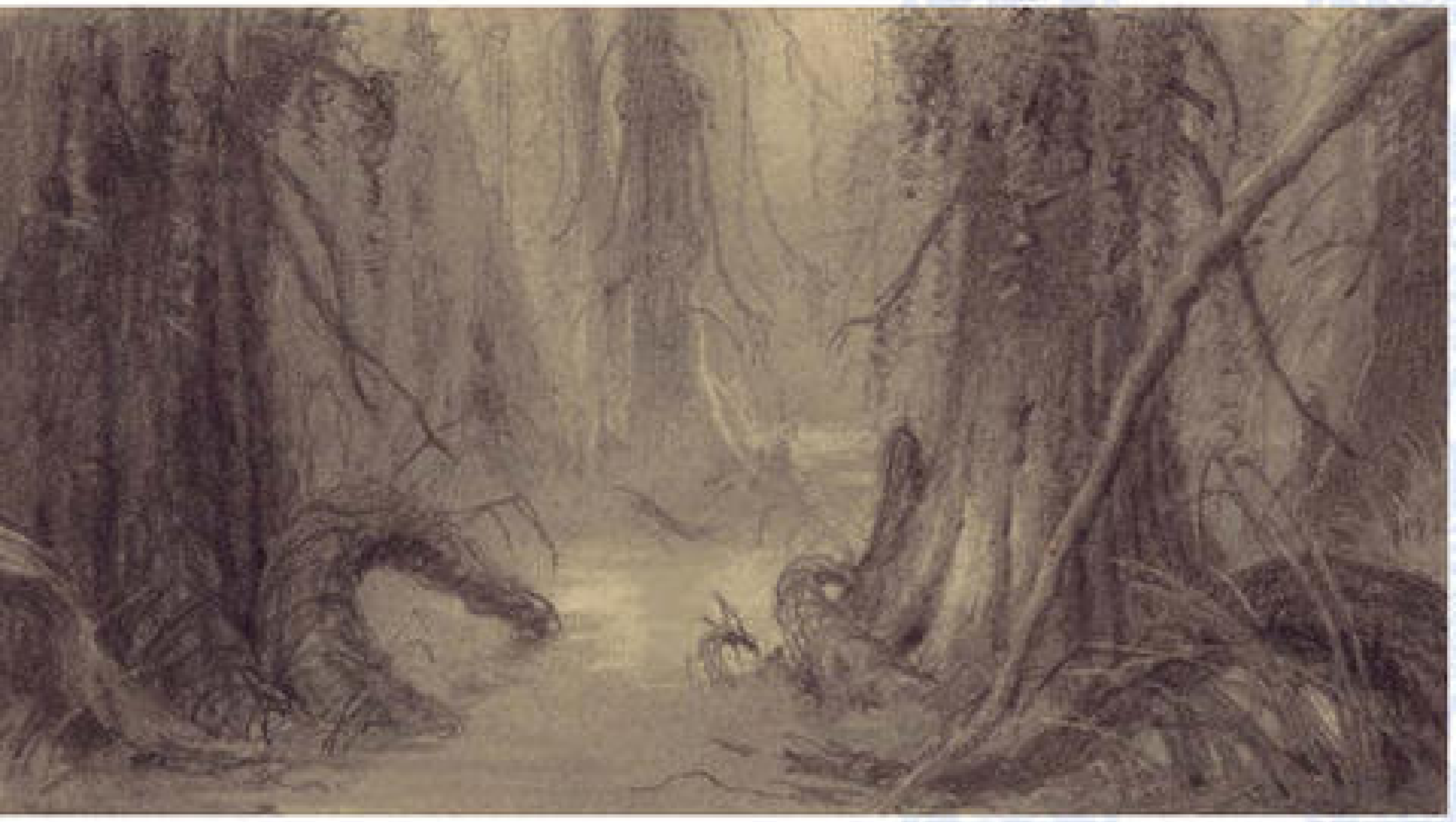


James Aaron Finch | digital

“I went to New Orleans, but I also went to South Carolina for the Bayou. They both offered two great views of this type of environment. I probably took 8,000 pictures in three days.”
—Rasoul Azadani, head of layout



Kelly McGraw | digital

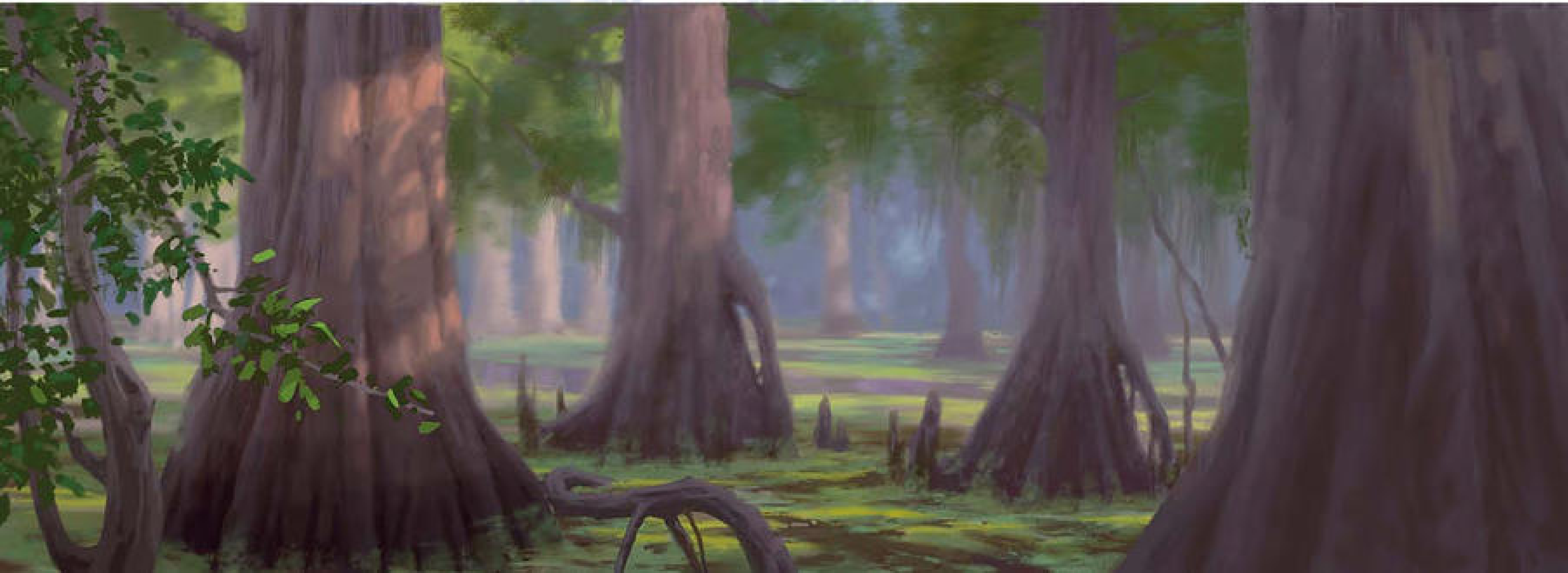


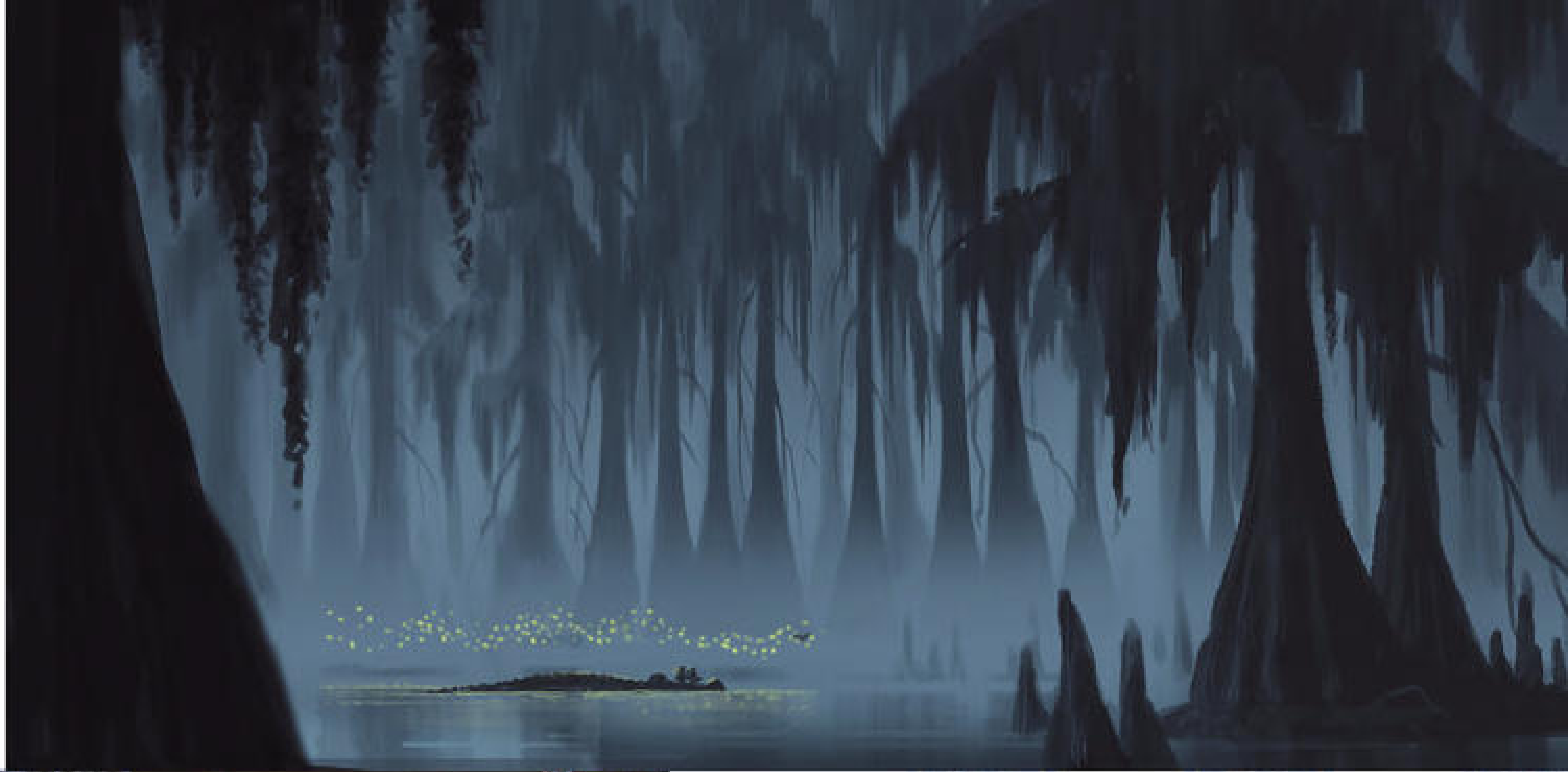
Craig Elliot | digital

"The devastation of Hurricane Katrina had severely impacted the local fauna and had profoundly changed the whole environment found in the Bayous of New Orleans. There are two basic kinds of Bayou: saltwater and freshwater. Greener more lush Bayous tend to be freshwater, hosting plants like Duckweed and Water Lilies, which are less tolerant of salt. Due to the storm surge from Katrina, seawater pushed into the freshwater Bayous, altering the whole appearance of the landscape. We were forced to look to the wetlands of South Carolina because it helped us reflect on the beautiful, colorful, and inviting Bayou of New Orleans."

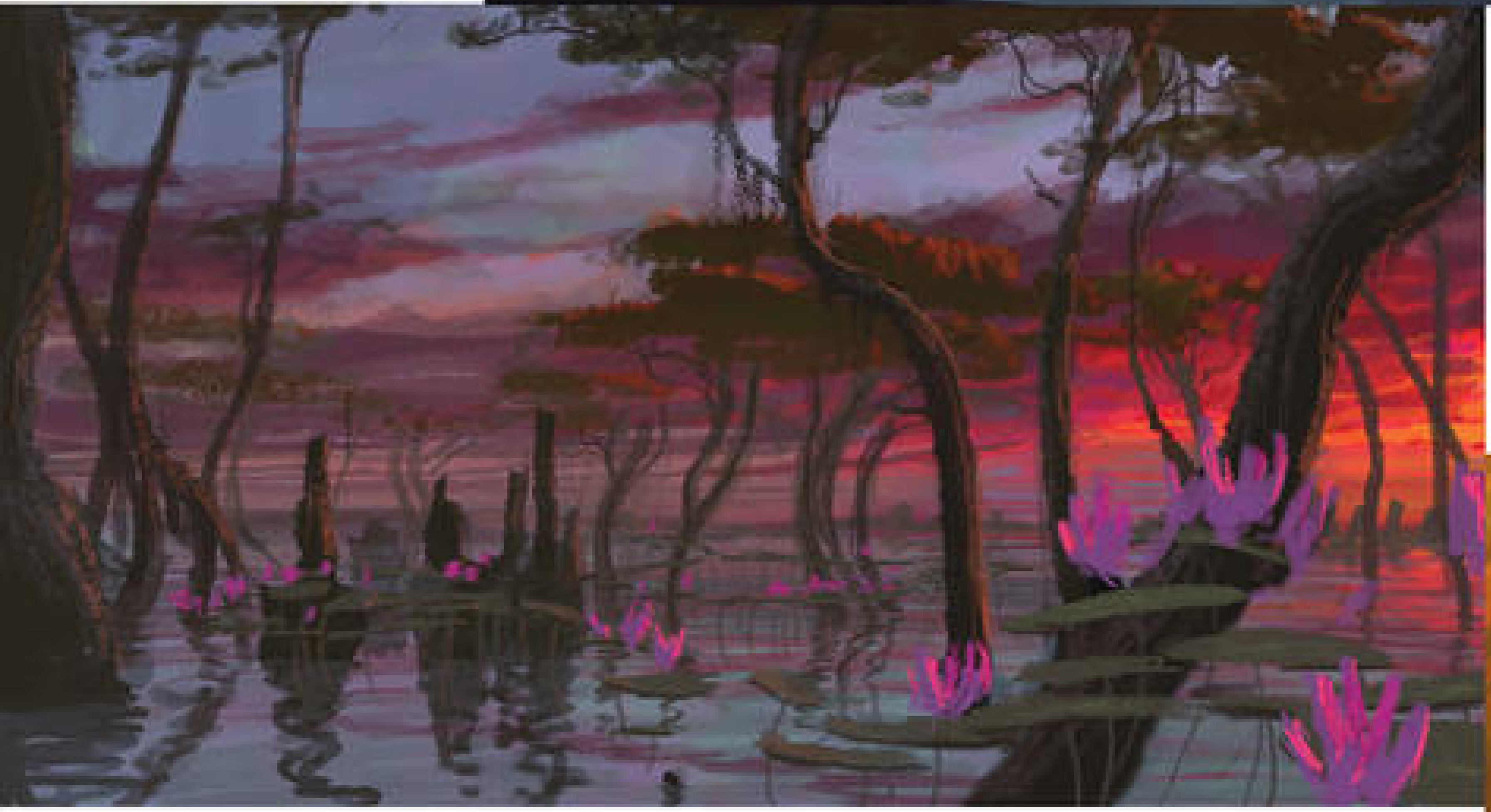
—IAN GOODING, art director

Sai Ping Lok | digital

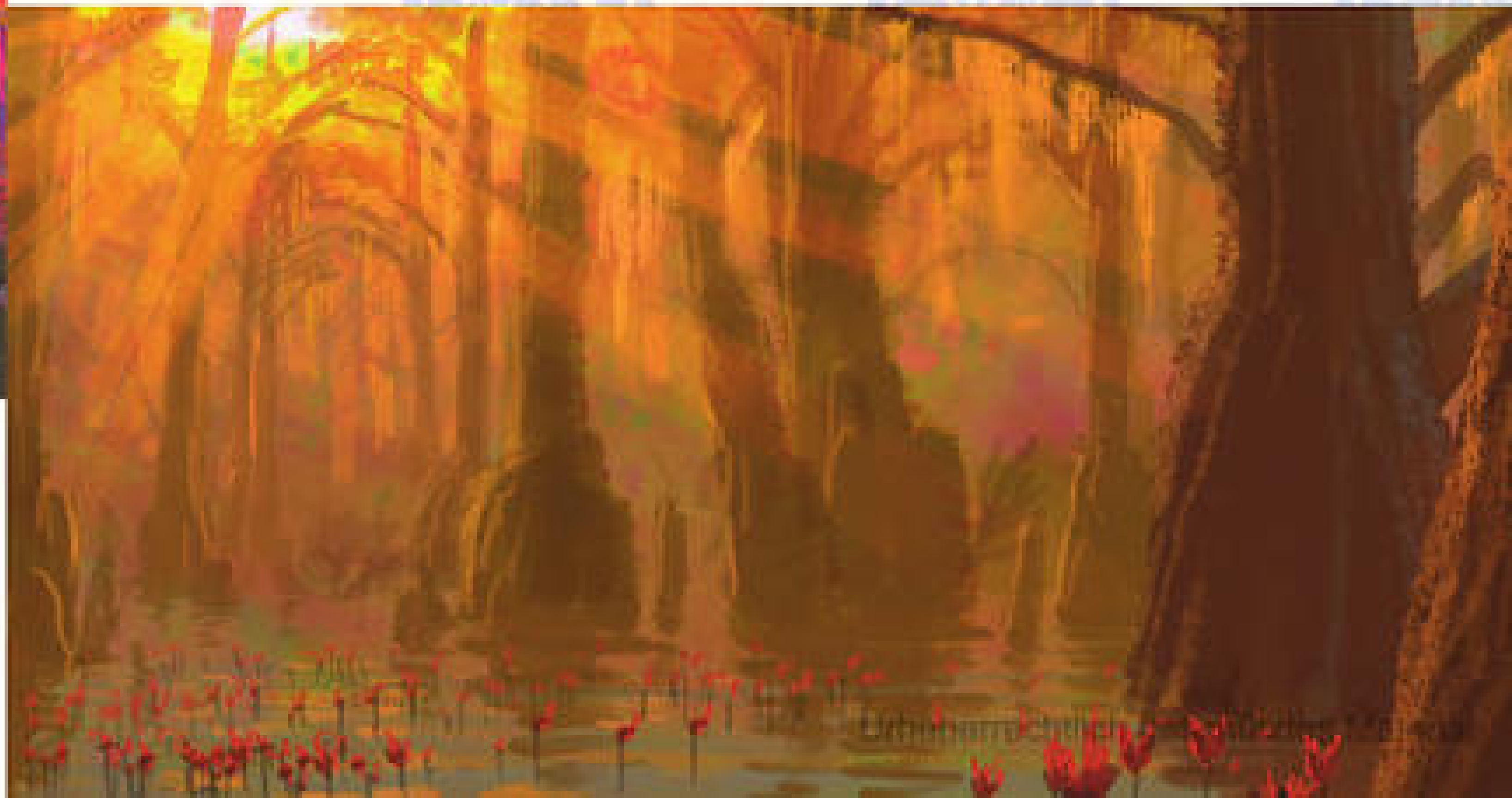




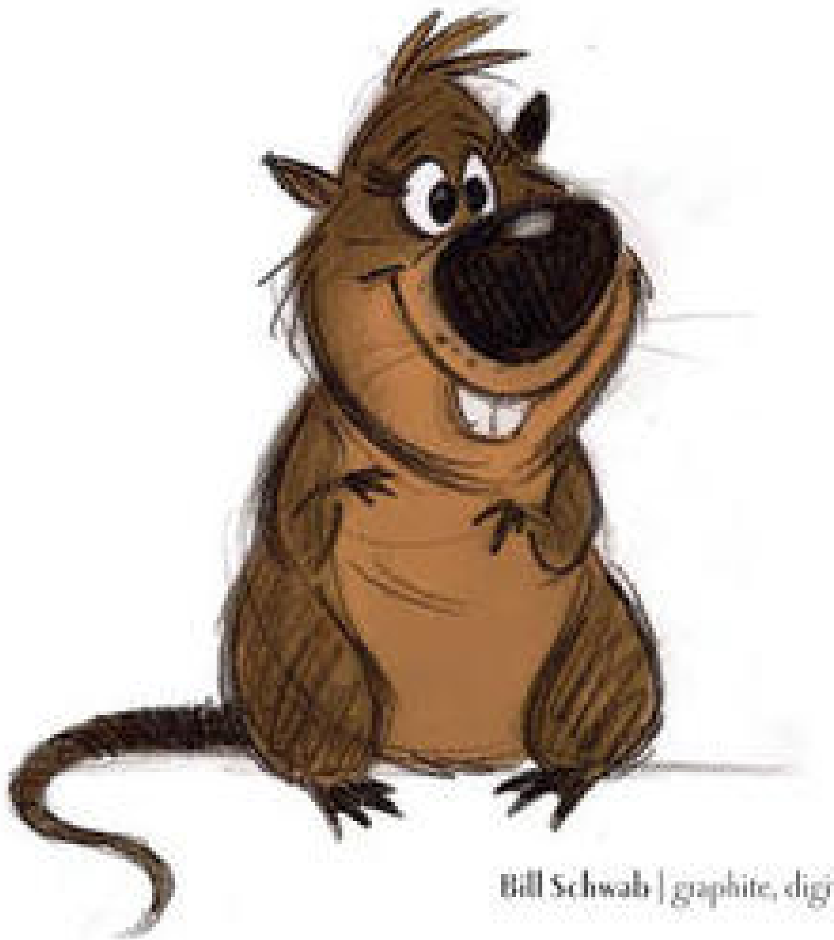
James Aaron Finch | digital



Craig Elliott | digital

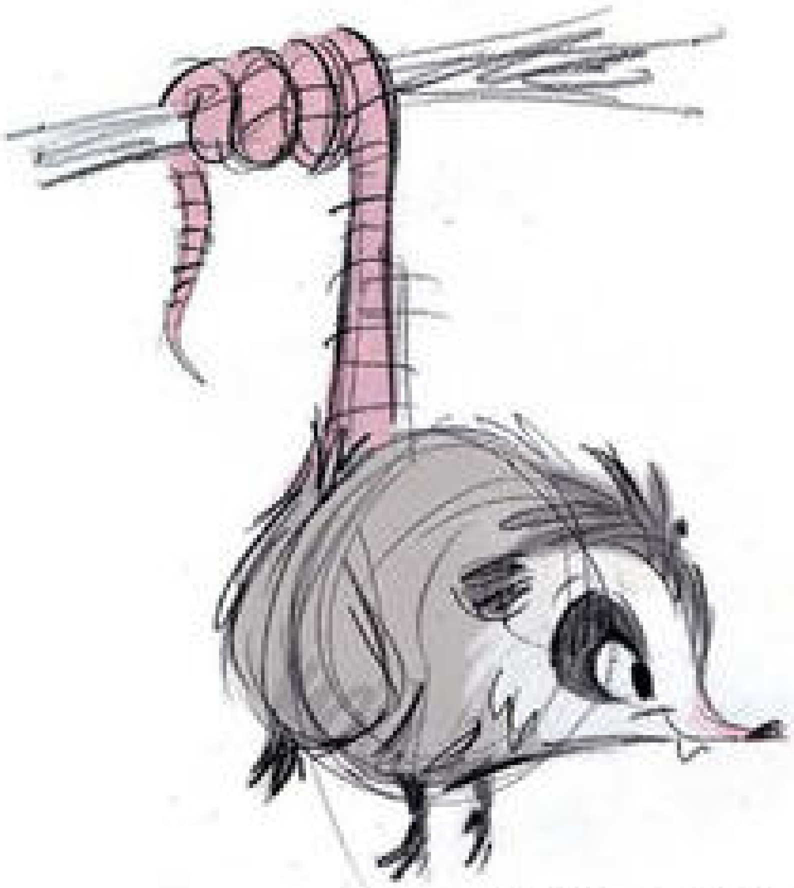


Craig Elliott | digital

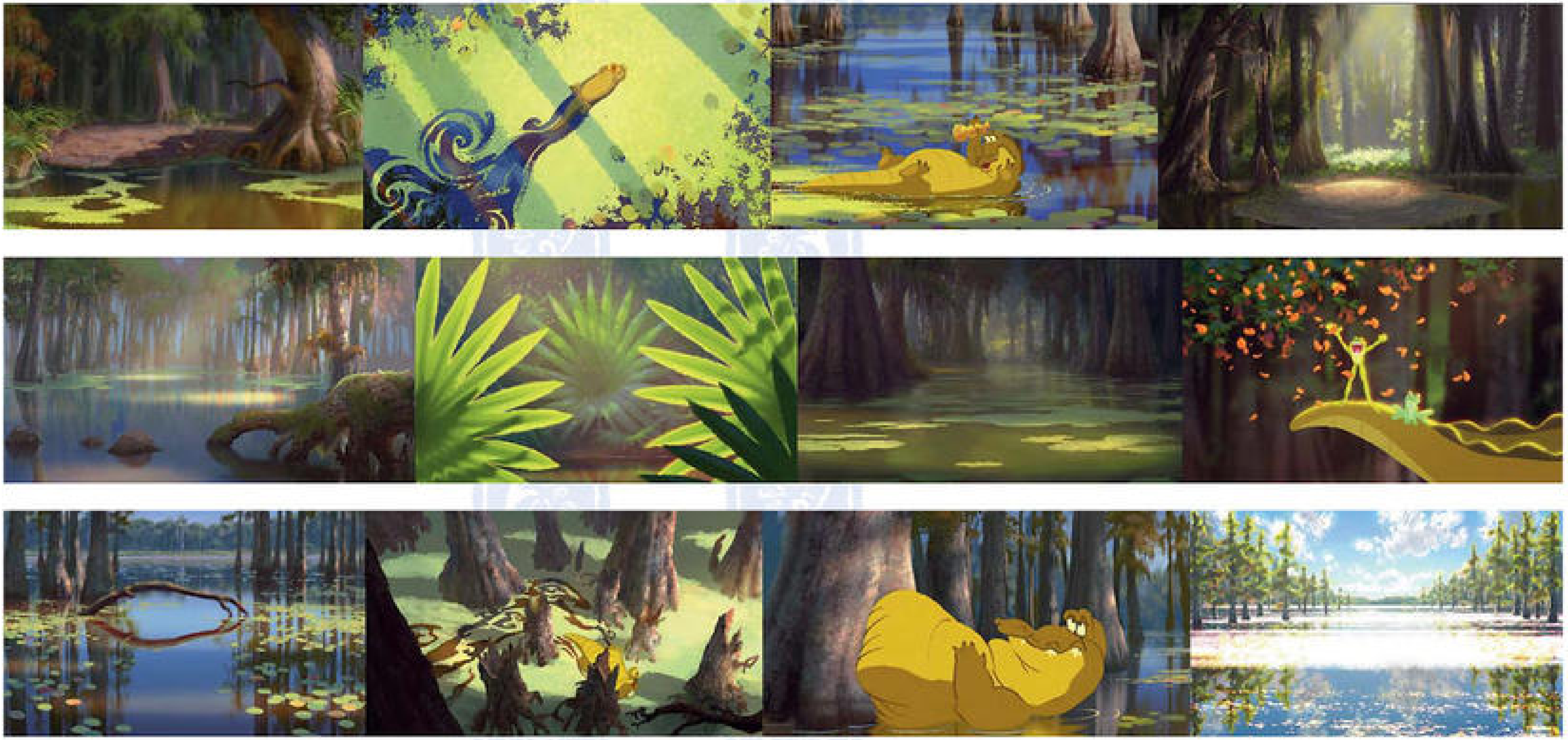


Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

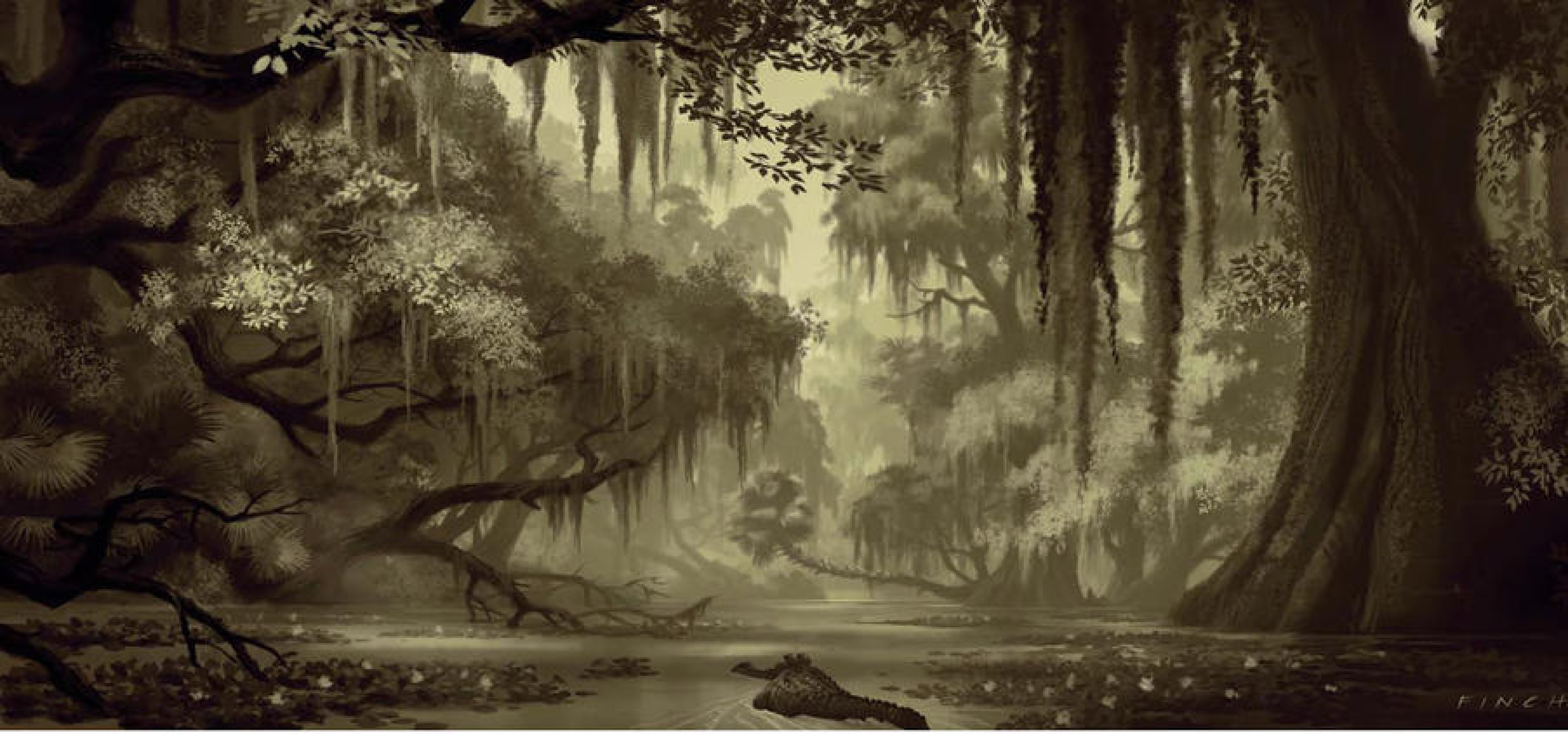
"Anyone who's been to Disneyland and gone on Pirates of the Caribbean has been ingrained with that image of something mysterious—the crickets, the fireflies, the sound of the guy plucking the banjo, the creepiness of the Spanish Moss. I'll tell you, it's rich in atmosphere, it's rich in visual opportunity, and we're just lucky that we get to dive in and try to learn how to draw that stuff."
—JAMES AARON FINCH, production designer



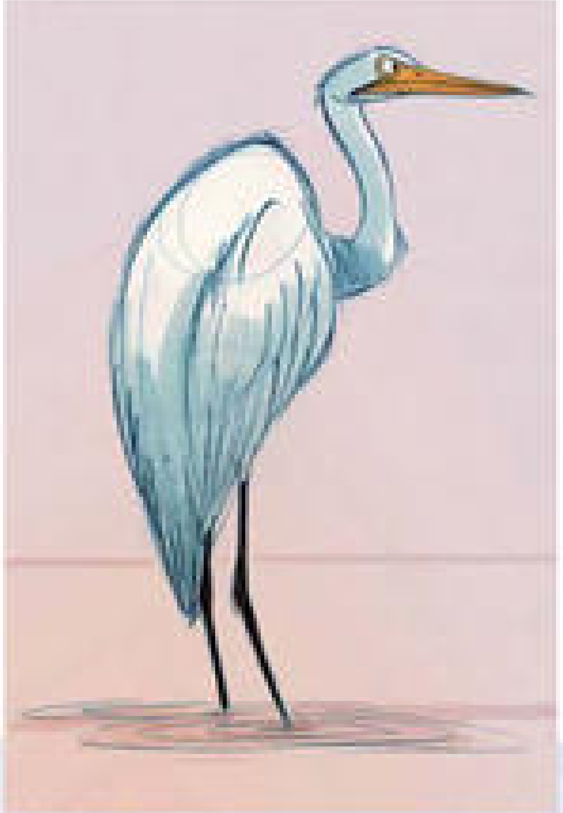
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

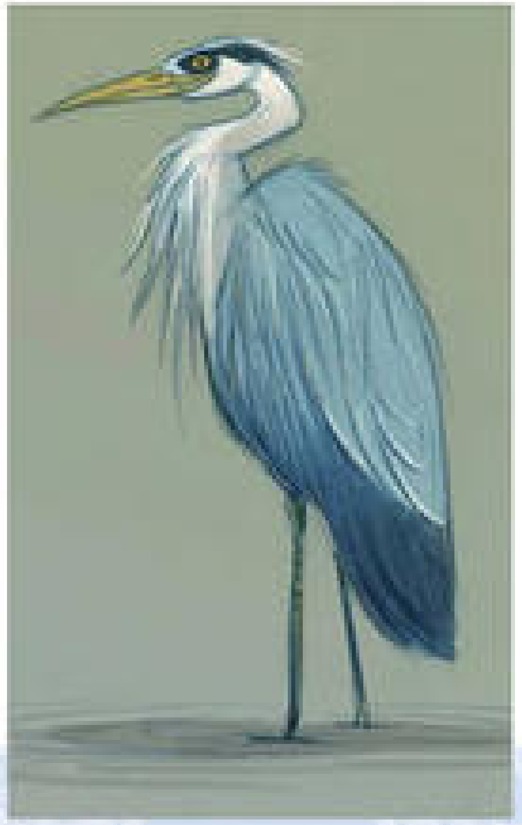


Color Script | Ian Gooding | digital

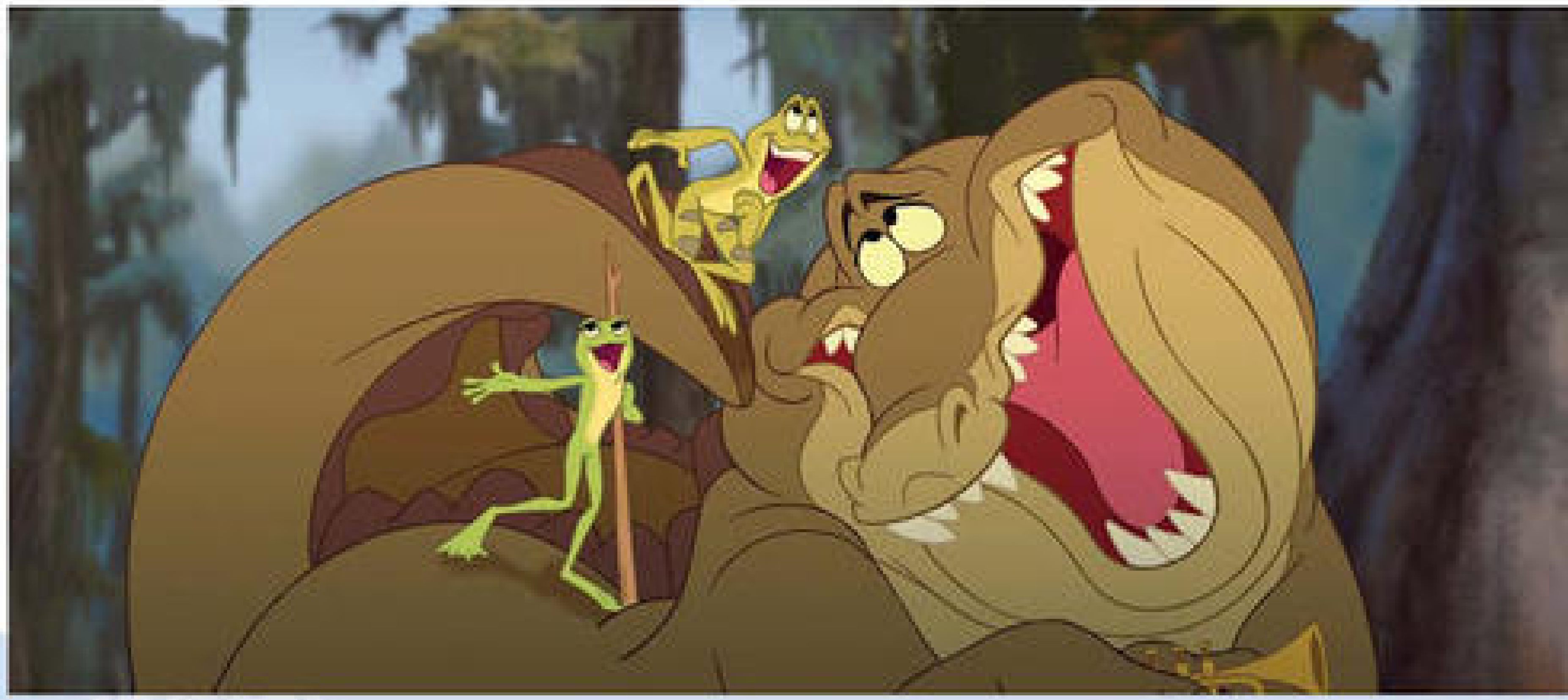


James Aaron Finch | digital

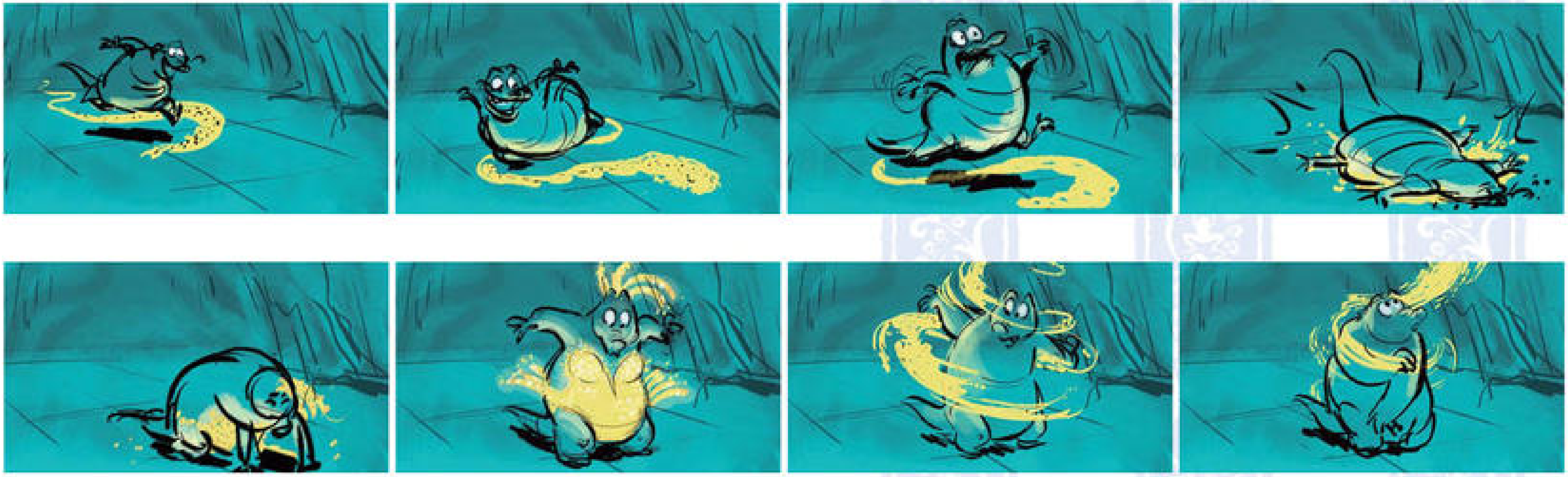




Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

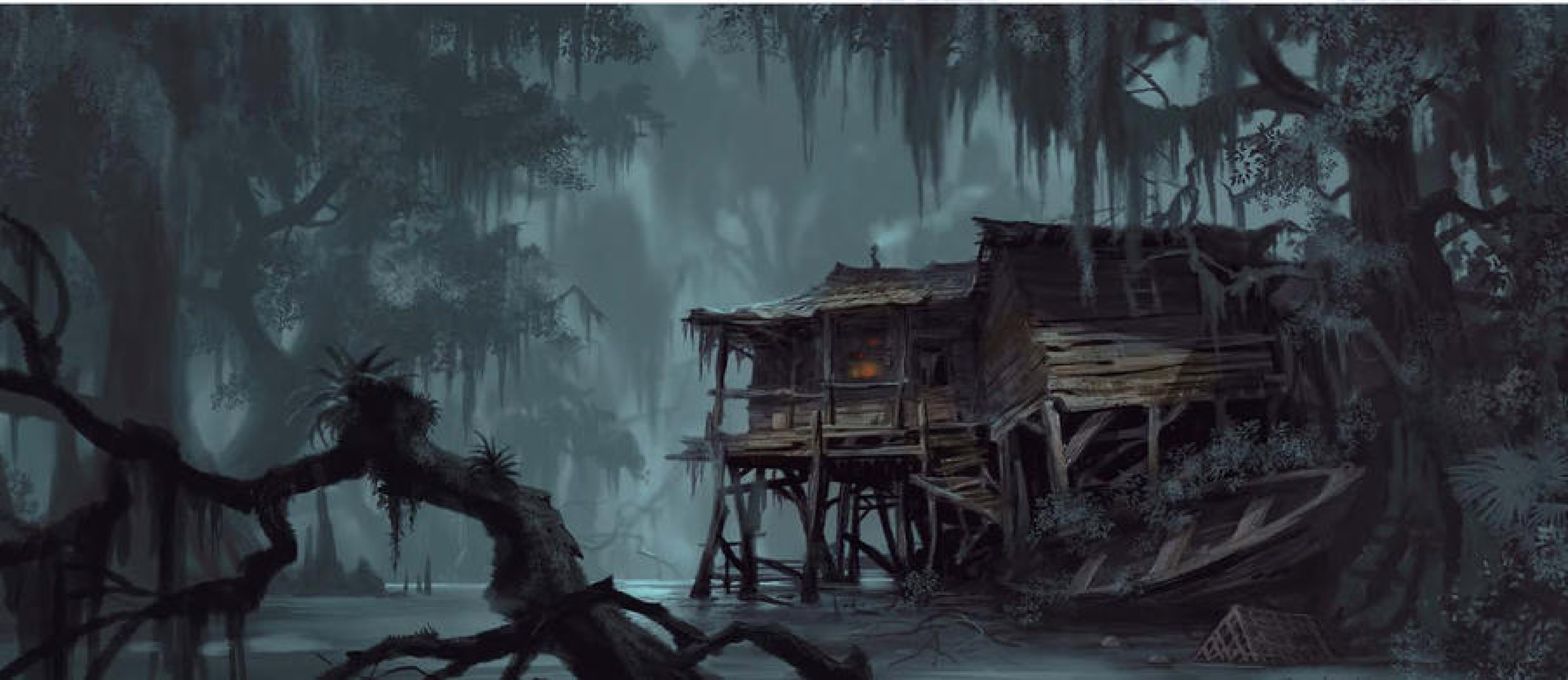


Color Styling/Compositing | digital



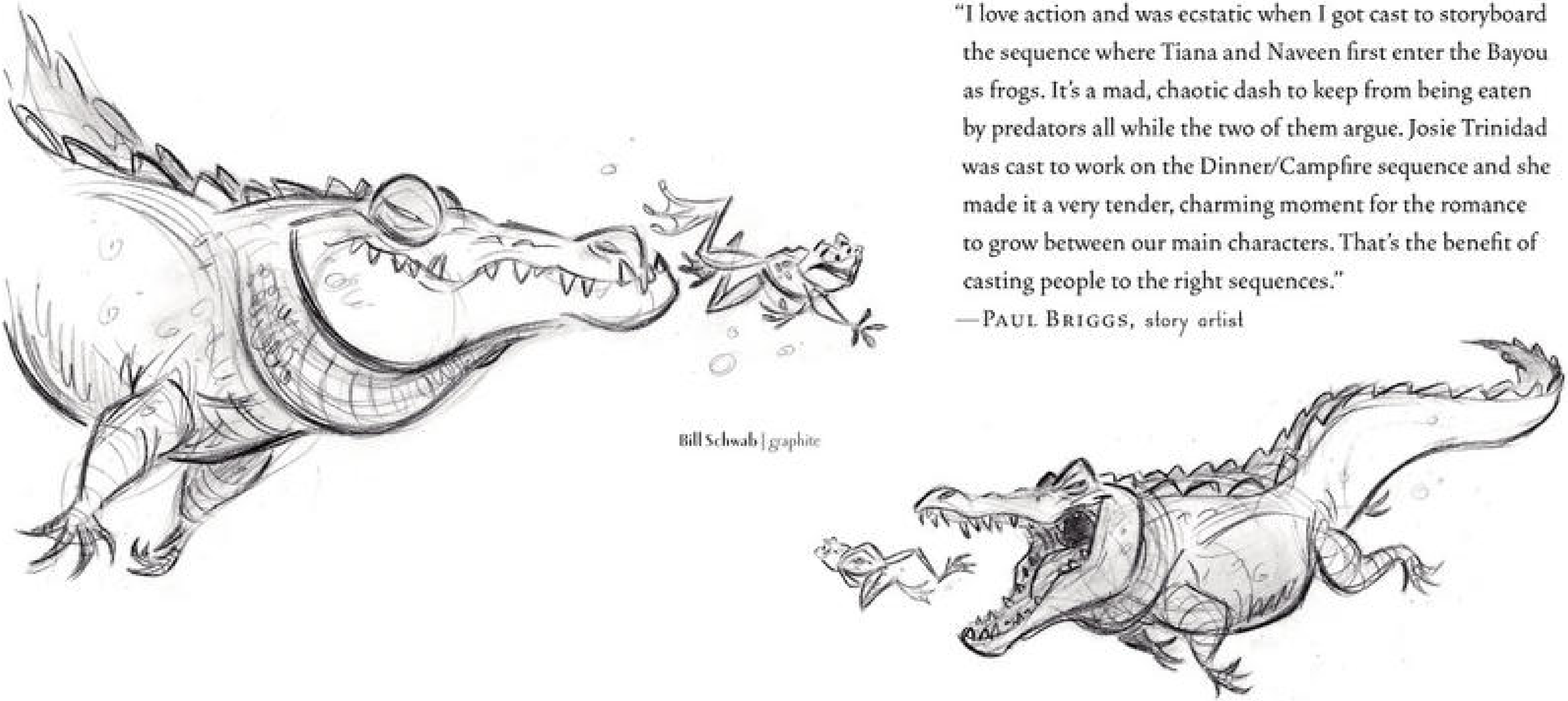
Storyboards | Nicole Mitchell | digital

James Aaron Finch | digital

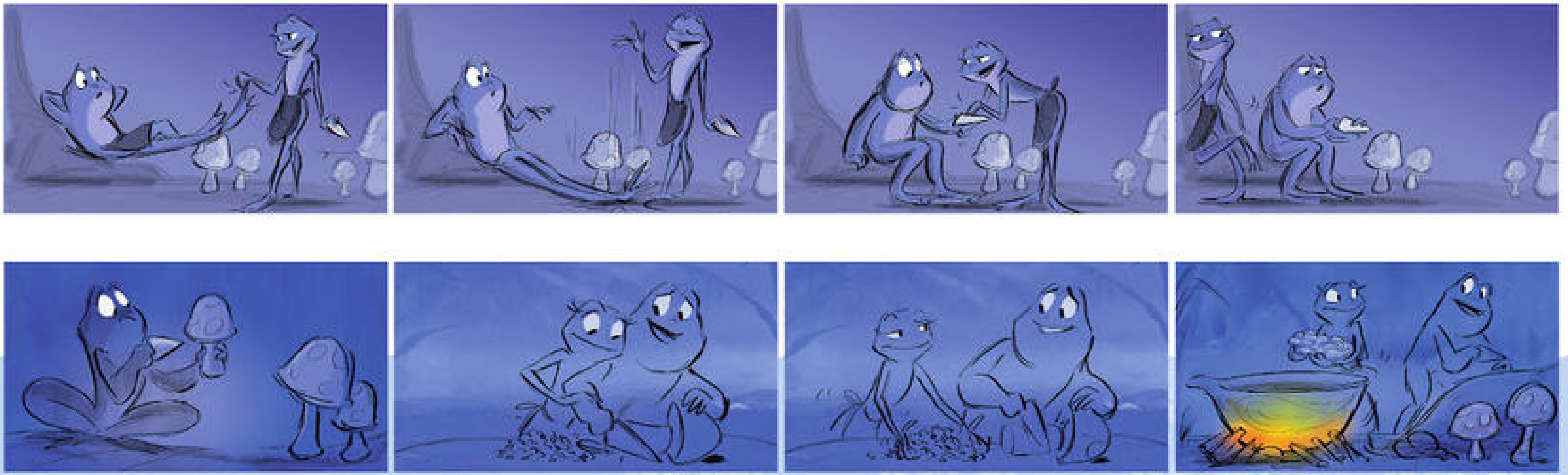


"I love action and was ecstatic when I got cast to storyboard the sequence where Tiana and Naveen first enter the Bayou as frogs. It's a mad, chaotic dash to keep from being eaten by predators all while the two of them argue. Josie Trinidad was cast to work on the Dinner/Campfire sequence and she made it a very tender, charming moment for the romance to grow between our main characters. That's the benefit of casting people to the right sequences."

—PAUL BRIGGS, *story artist*



Bill Schwab | graphite



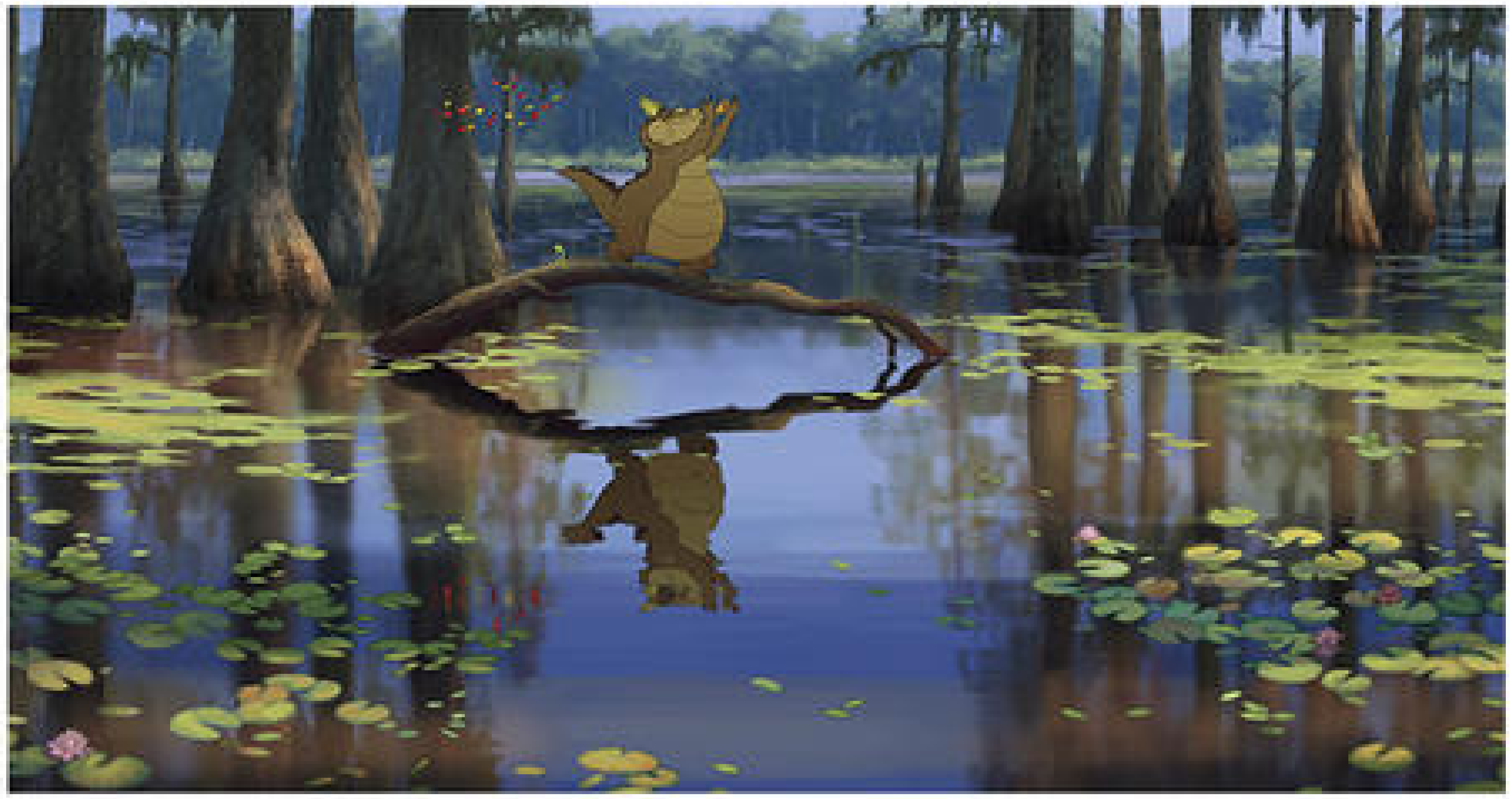
Storyboards | Josie Trinidad | digital

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES

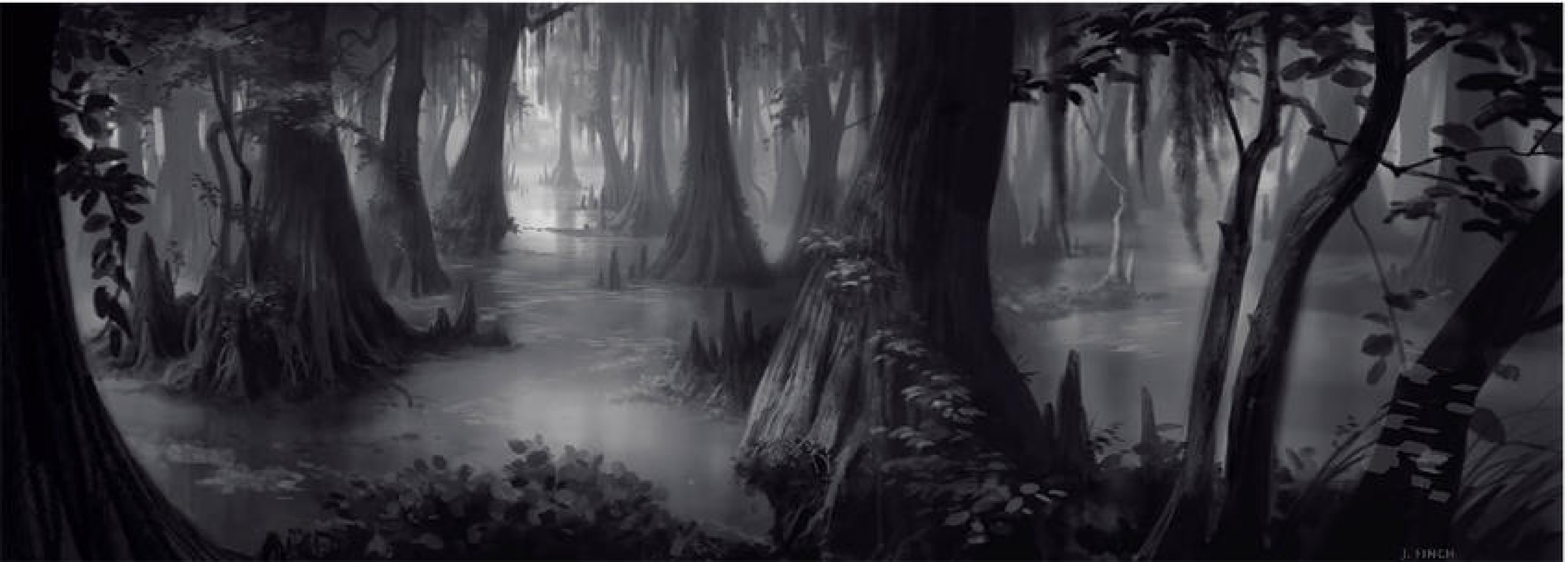
Bringing together such disparate environments was a genuine concern of the production team, but perhaps not in the manner one might assume. Kyle Odermatt explains, " The organics of the Bayou are easy to do, straight to final. The architectural things were actually harder to do. And real chailenge from an artistic standpoint is going from one to another and having it feel okay."

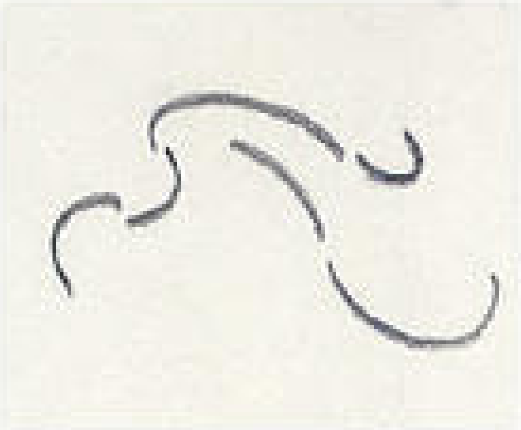
"The directors were talking about *Lady and the Tramp* for the architectural stuff, but *Bambi* for the natural stuff, the organic stuff!" Ian Gooding says,"That's a good jumping-off point, but I didn't think we could really do that, because if you were to edit together *Bambi* and *Lady and the Tramp*. you'd have a mess. As beautiful as thay are individually, they just wouldn't go together.

The dominant *Bambi* influence of the film derives not from simply a "look,"but rather the philosophical, theoretical, and technical underpinnings of the classic feature.

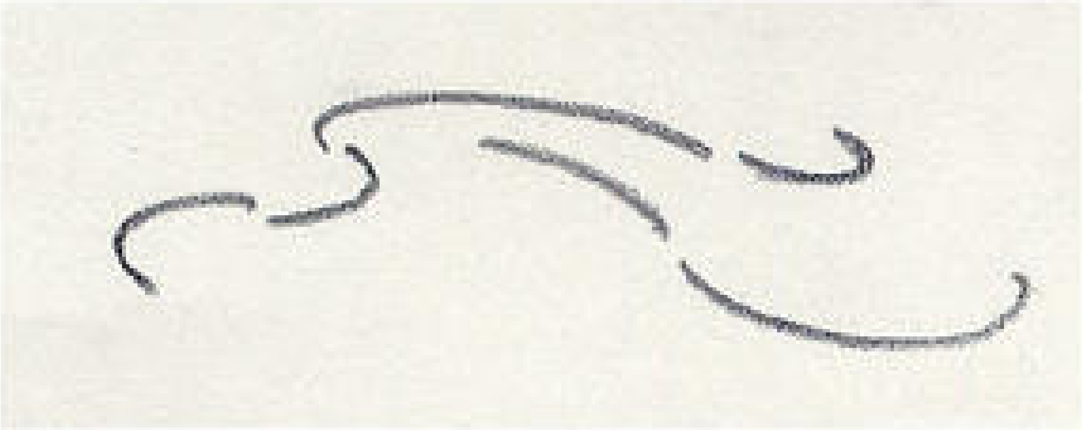


Gooding explains, "In *Bambi* they look something incredible comlex a forest environment - leaves and twigs, rocks and bark dungeon, everything else that you find a forest - and they include only what was important. They painted how it feels to be in forest, include of painting a forest. You don't miss the billions of twigs and leaves and stuff. And it's that sprint that we're trying to go which for our movie."



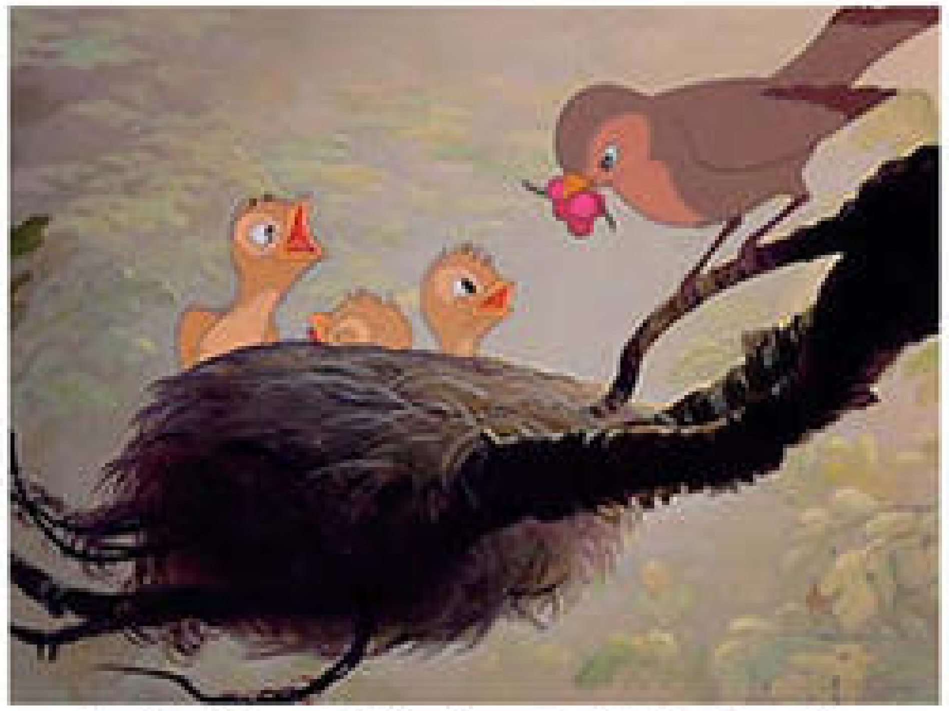


2D Rhythm

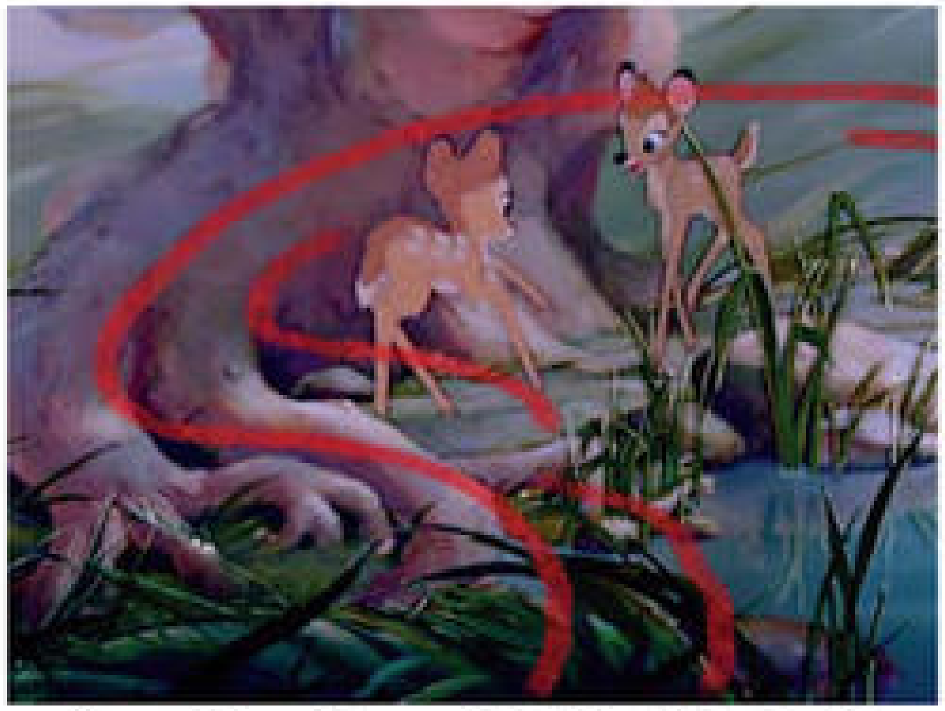


Rhythm in Perspective

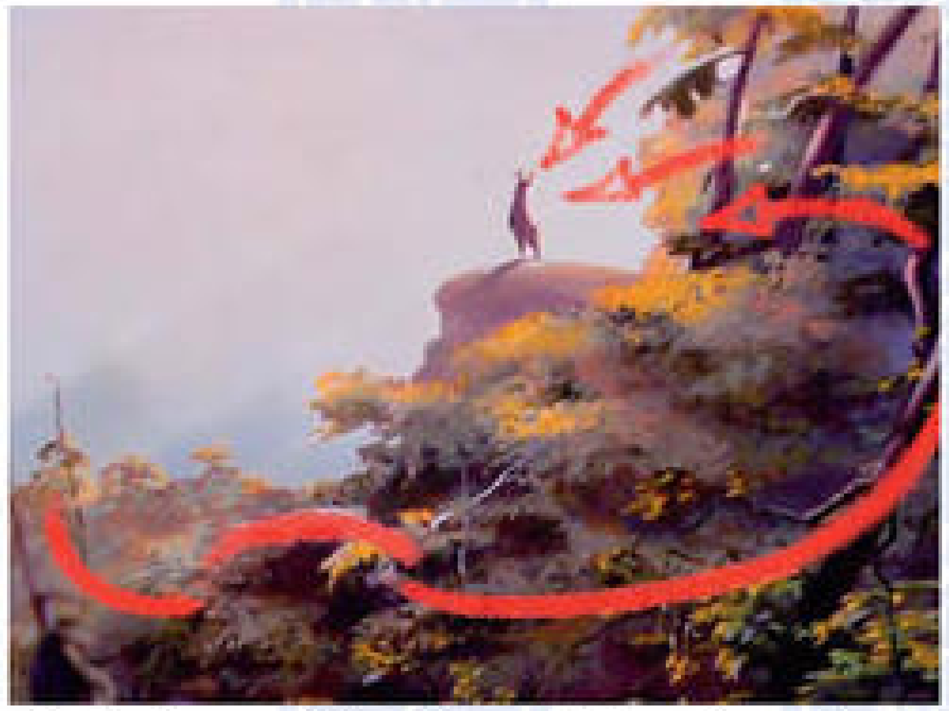
In order to direct and lead the eye, an attractive visual rhythm was a strong design principle. Complementary curves were infused through the branches and foliage, often made up of multiple elements working simultaneously to create a single rhythmic path, sometimes designed in perspective and flowing through the composition. This pathway most often supports the character's action, or directs the viewer to a focal point. Sometimes the path unifies the elements of the background.



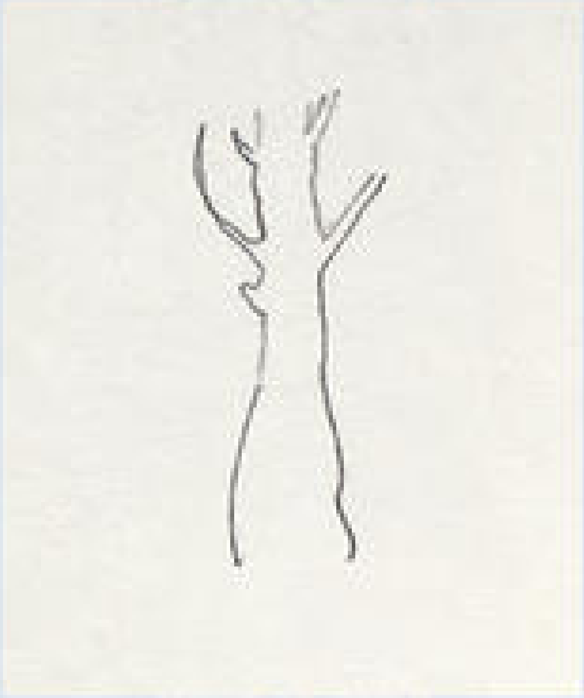
In *Bambi*, one rhythm is created by the branch, and another by the leaves in the background



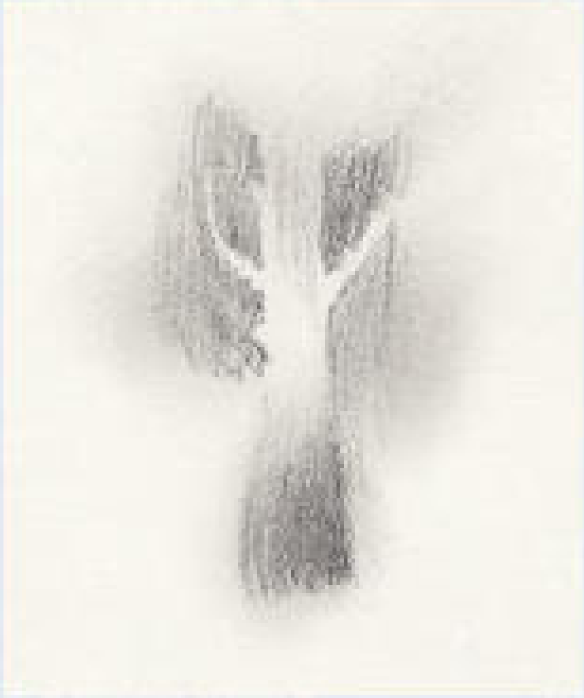
Compositional flow motivates Bambi's backwards walking action in a rhythmic fashion



Rhythmic compositional flow points to main area focus

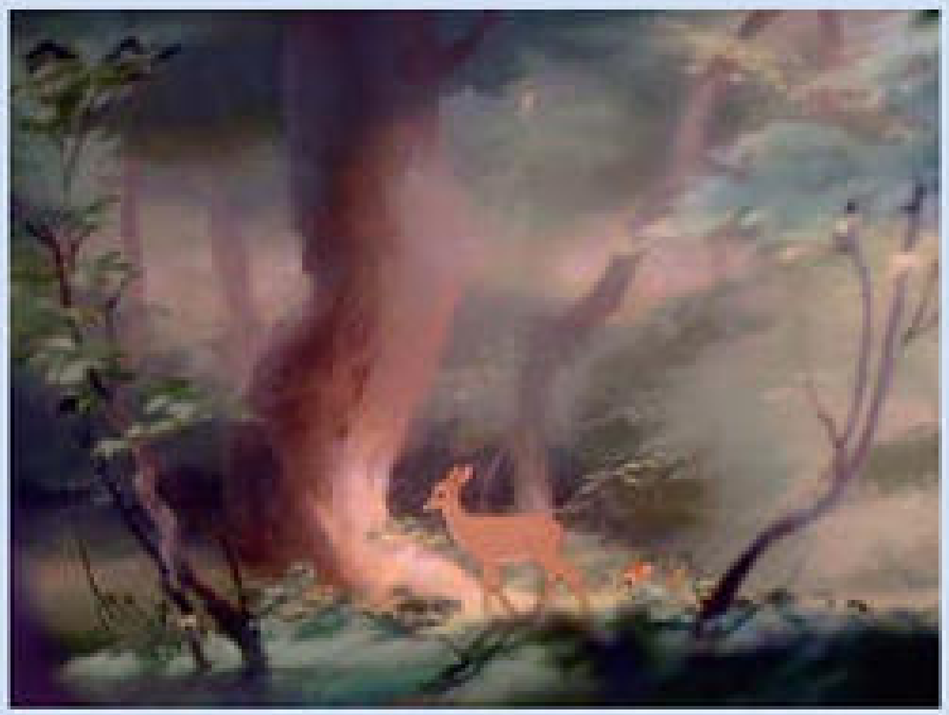


Shape Outline



Counter Change

Depth and value are enhanced by maintaining bold silhouettes in the tradition of Japanese painter and printmaker Hiroshige (1797–1858), heightened by a technique of alternating value contrast, sometimes known as "counter change" (a pattern formed by repetitive figures, but alternating color or texture).



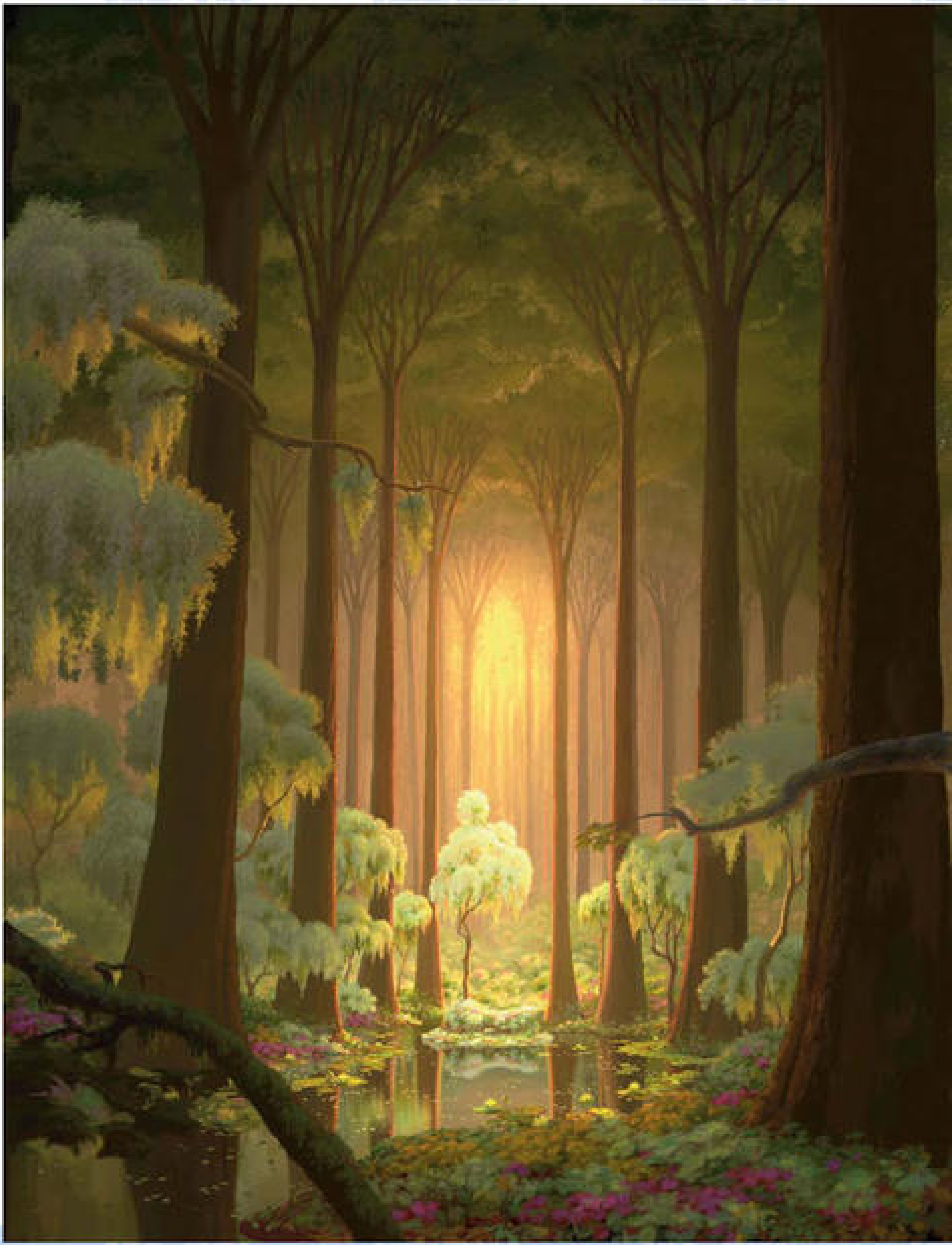
Bambi Counter Change shapes

THE BACKGROUND ARTISTS

The task for the background artists was seemingly backwards, according to Sunny Apinchapong. "It's often a challenge to figure out what to include in a feature, but here what to *leave out* was more important, so it would be less distracting to the focal point where we stage the characters. We keep everything pretty soft and focused on basic silhouette shape and design, rather than just rendering the scenes."

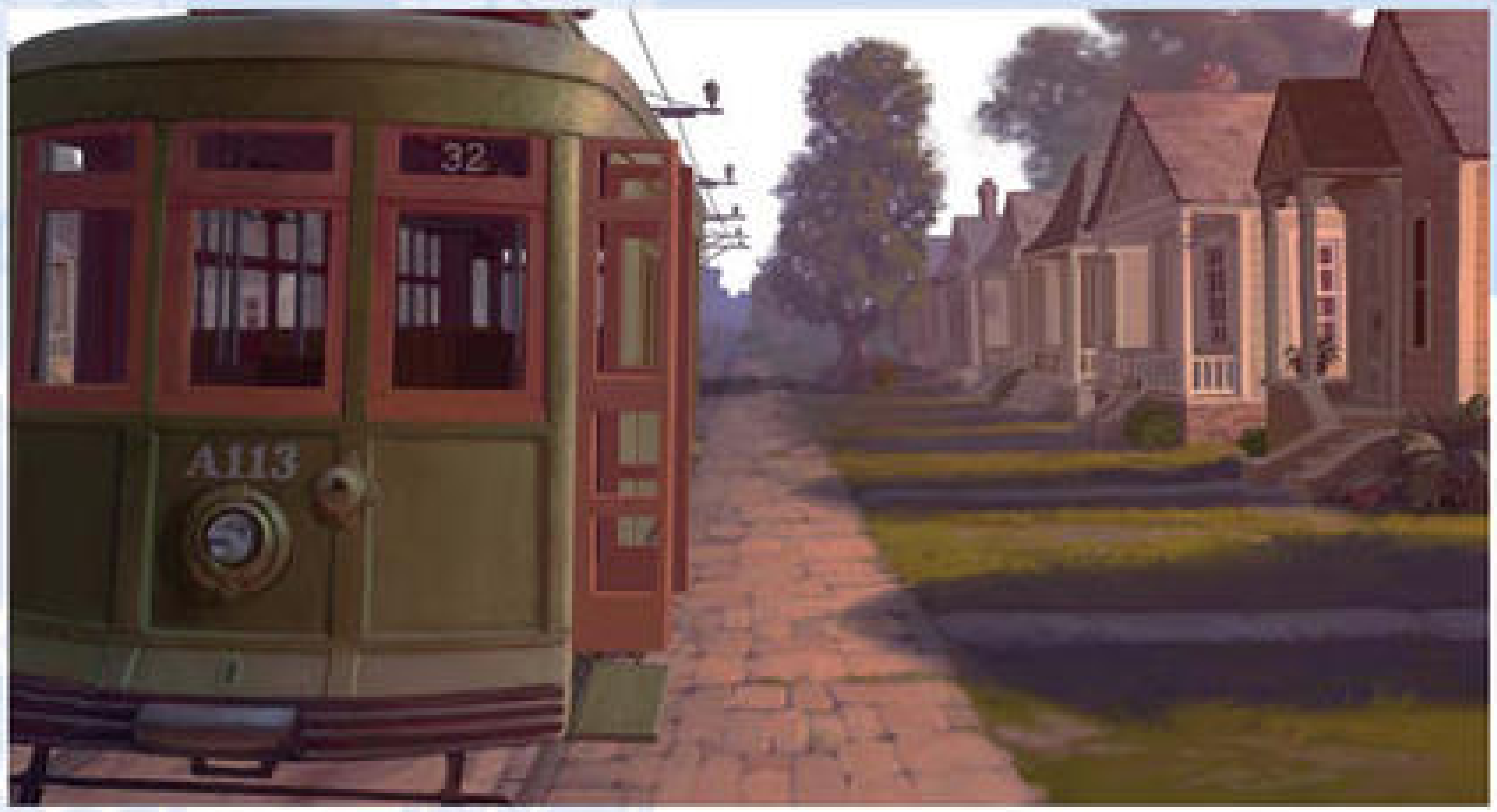
In color styling, visual development artist Lorelay Bove saw a need to balance the location reality with the dictates of the story. "For the color on the Bayou, I would look at photographs and conduct general research, and really look at what's appealing from those pictures, or what colors were working together. I looked at that, and then at bayou plants, and then I just worked everything together, always thinking if the moment is a sad one, maybe it's monochromatic and more on the gray side—it depends on what scene, and on what mood."

Ian Gooding says, "It's an exploration to see how far you can push things, and when we did that with the bayou stuff, we pushed it really, really far—and people didn't object. So you can actually leave it there. The buildings, you have to pull back a little bit. But they do feel 'of the same world.'"

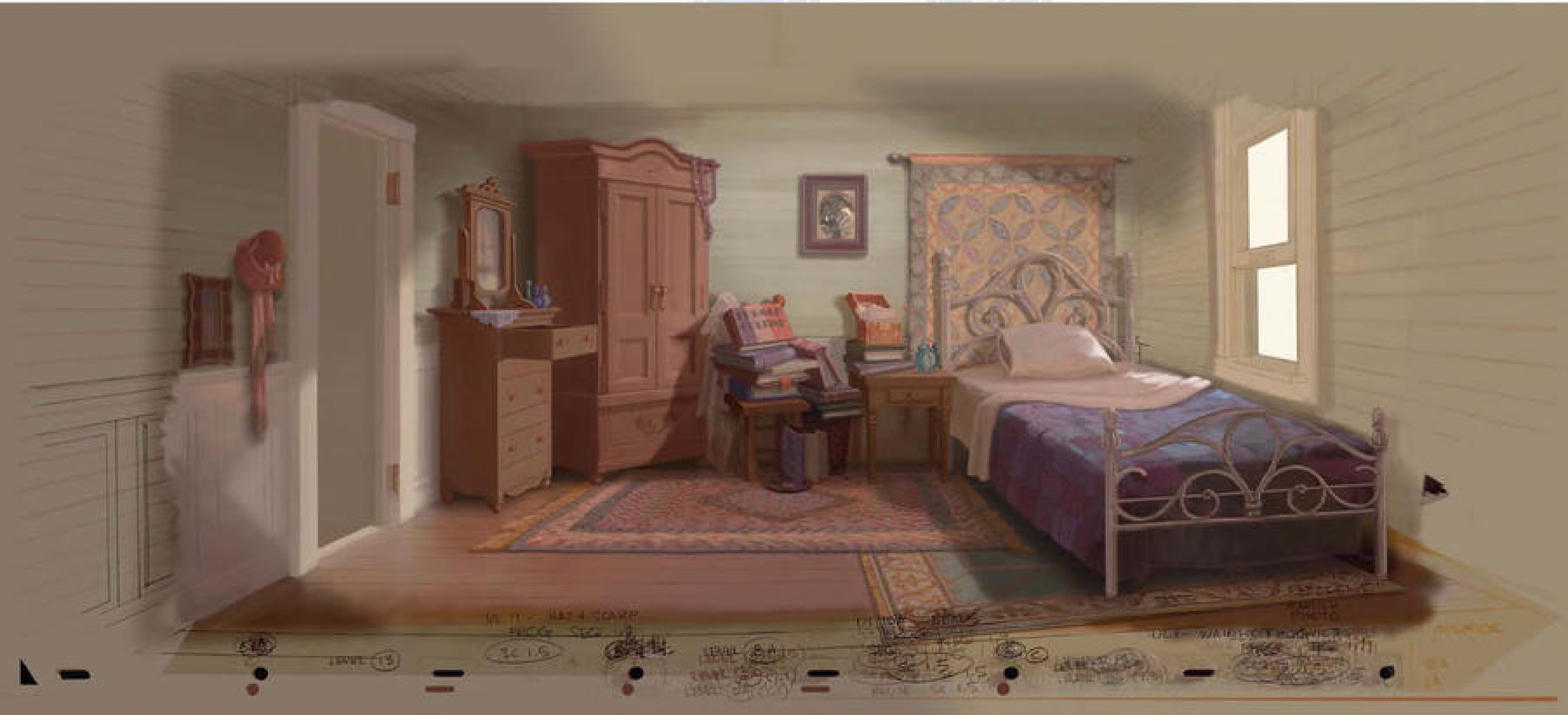


Greg Miller, Doug Ball | digital

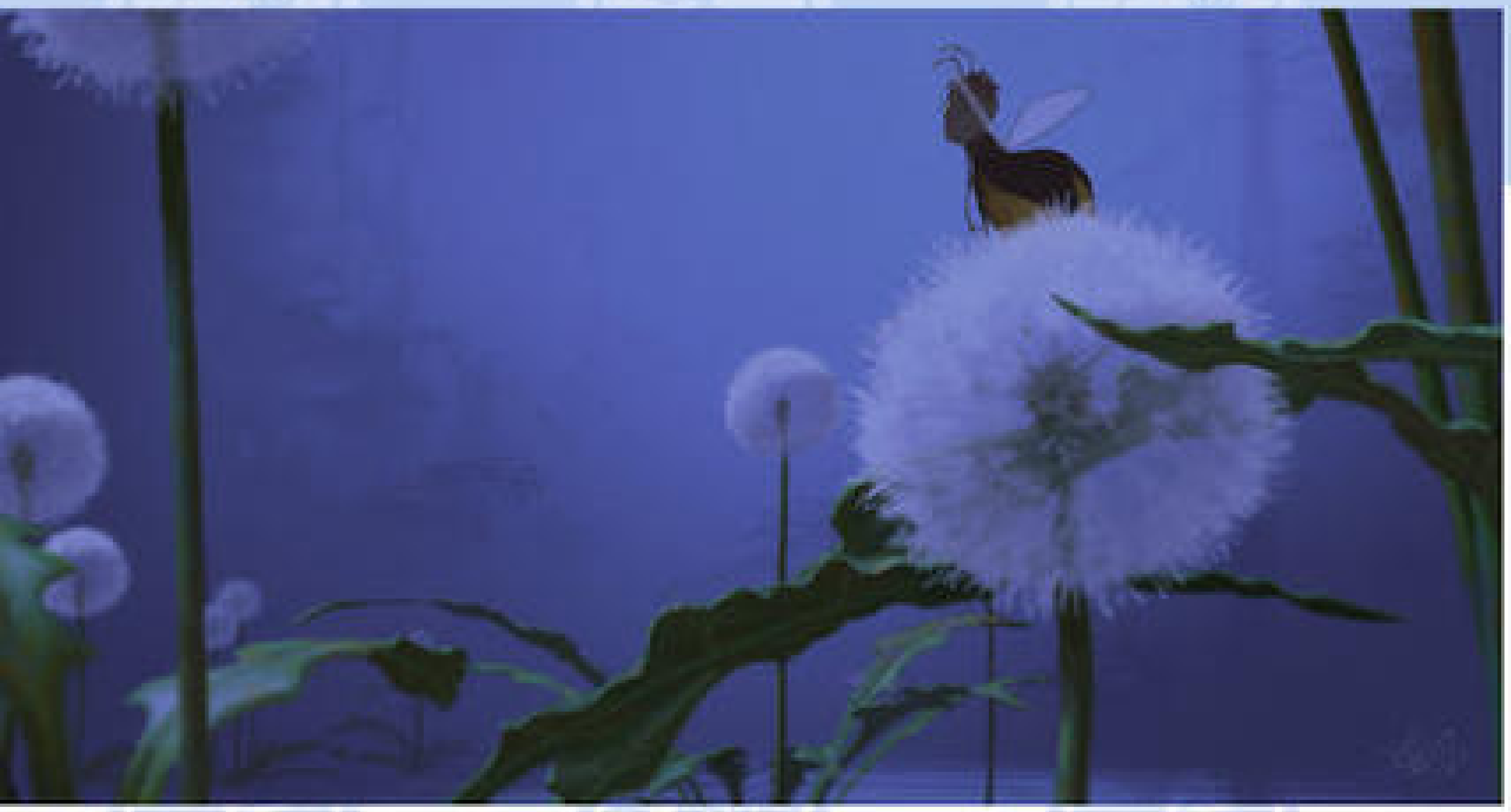
"We started with a background, and I painted it, contextually, too far—too organic, too brush-stroked, too painterly, too soft. We put characters on top of it and showed it to the directors and John Lasseter. They said, 'Parts of this are working, but let's tighten up these areas,' and we started pulling back from the one that was too far, until we found something that worked. I think what we ended up with works really well."
—IAN GOODING, art director



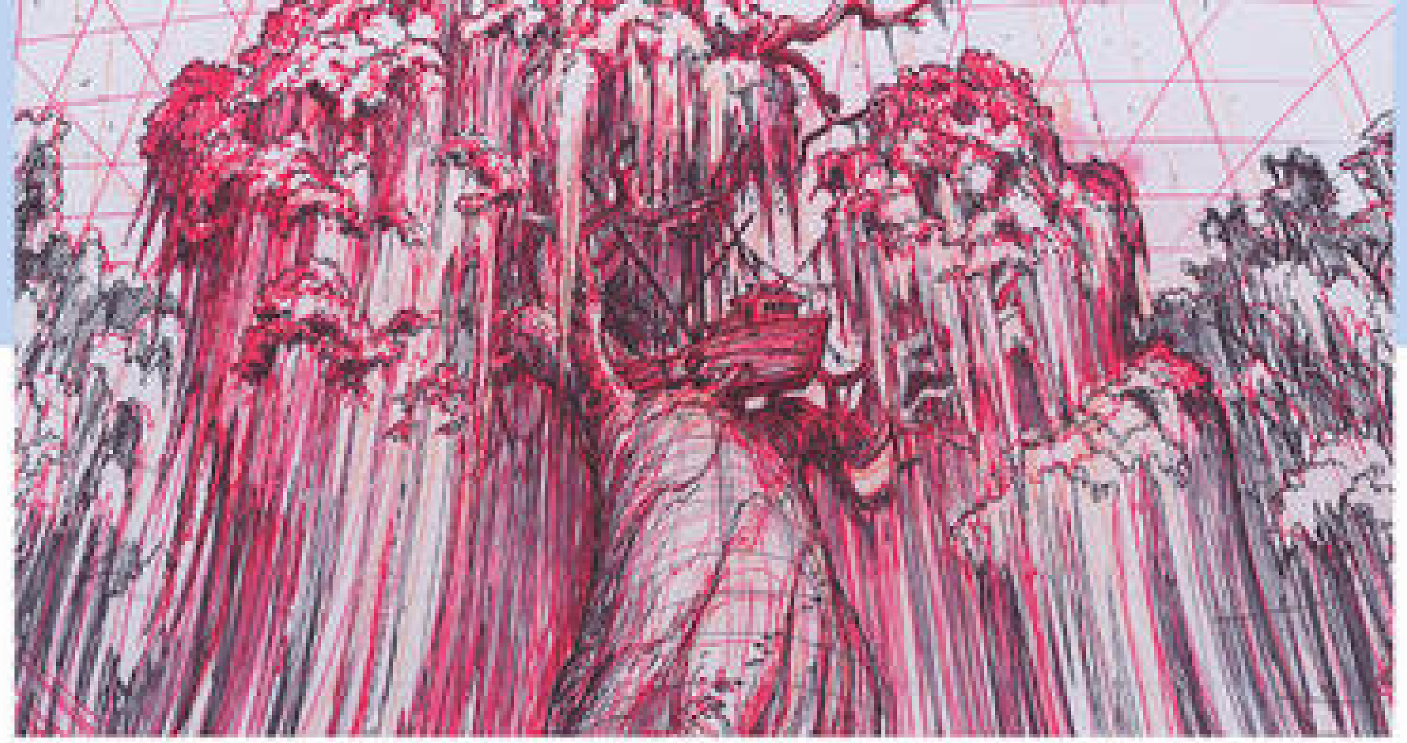
Dan Read, Youa Vang | digital



Lisa Keene | digital



Craig Elliot | digital



James Aaron Finch | marker

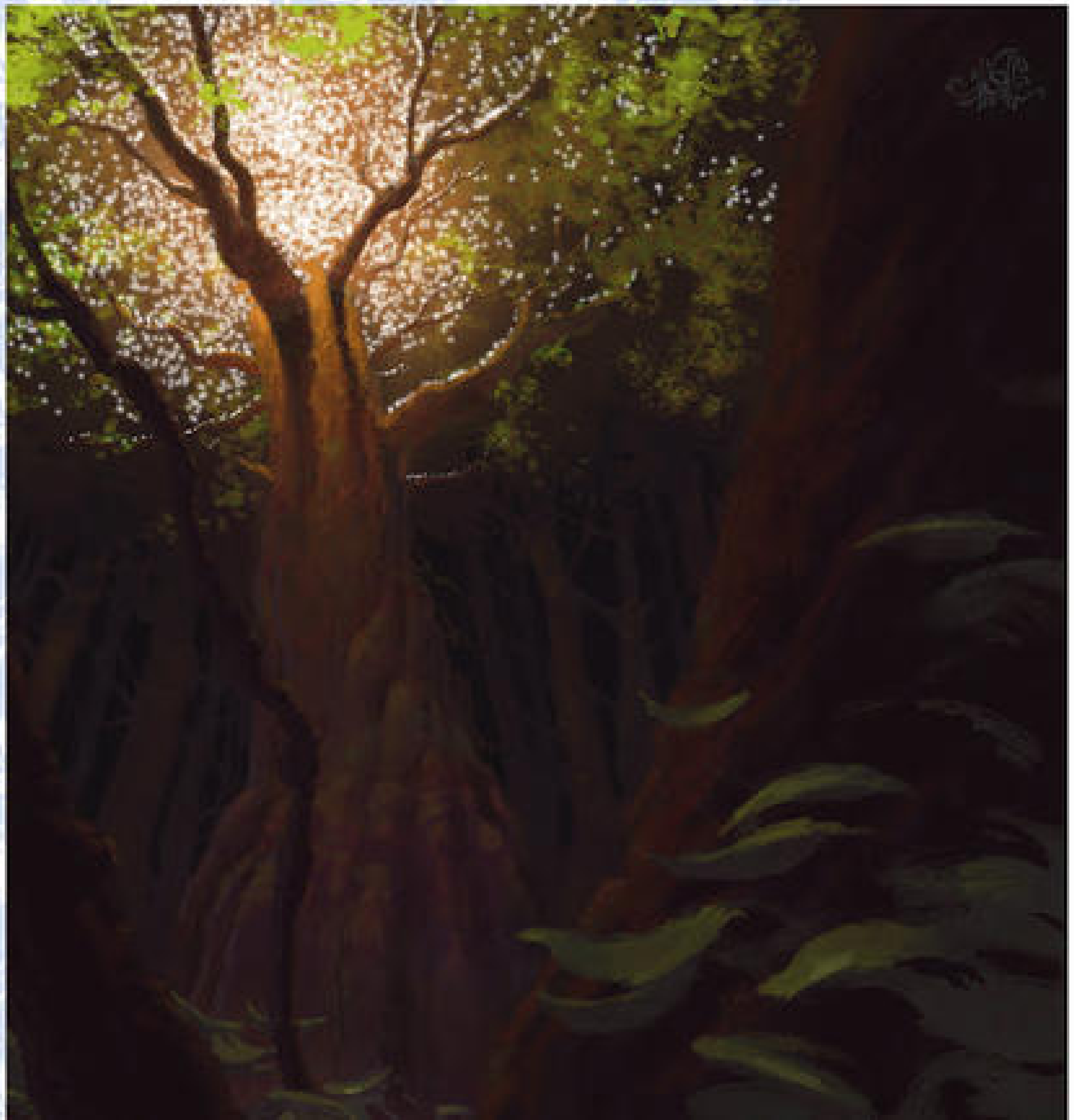
POINT OF VIEW/SCALE

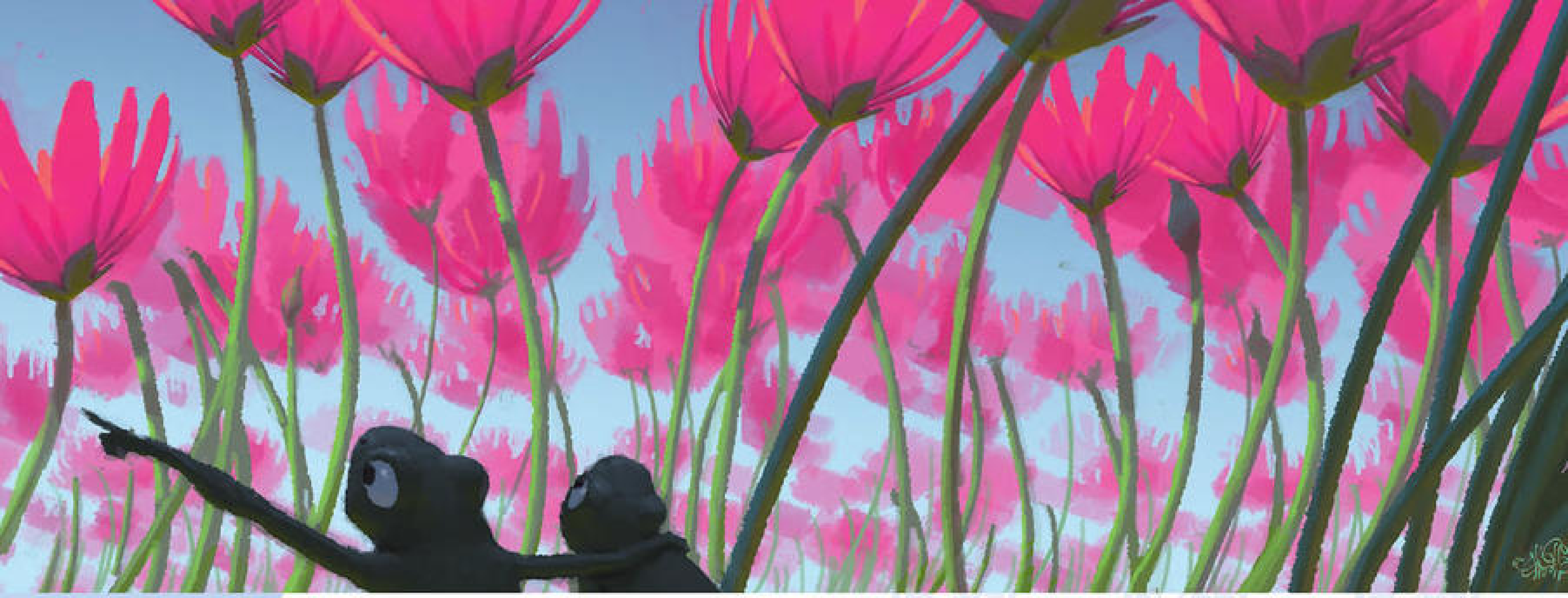
The sizes of differing species of characters (from fireflies to humans, with snakes, frogs, cats, and alligators in between) led to another unique design challenge for the filmmakers, that of creating a relative scale that would enable the appropriate staging of scenes between characters of differing sizes, and their scale relationships to their settings.

"It's always helpful—and painful," laughs supervising animator Eric Goldberg. "I mean, it's something we always have to be aware of and not just cheat like mad so it doesn't feel real. Yes, there's some liberties that you can take in order to stage things effectively and make it look like characters are having a conversation, but everything has to be in proper relationship to everything else."

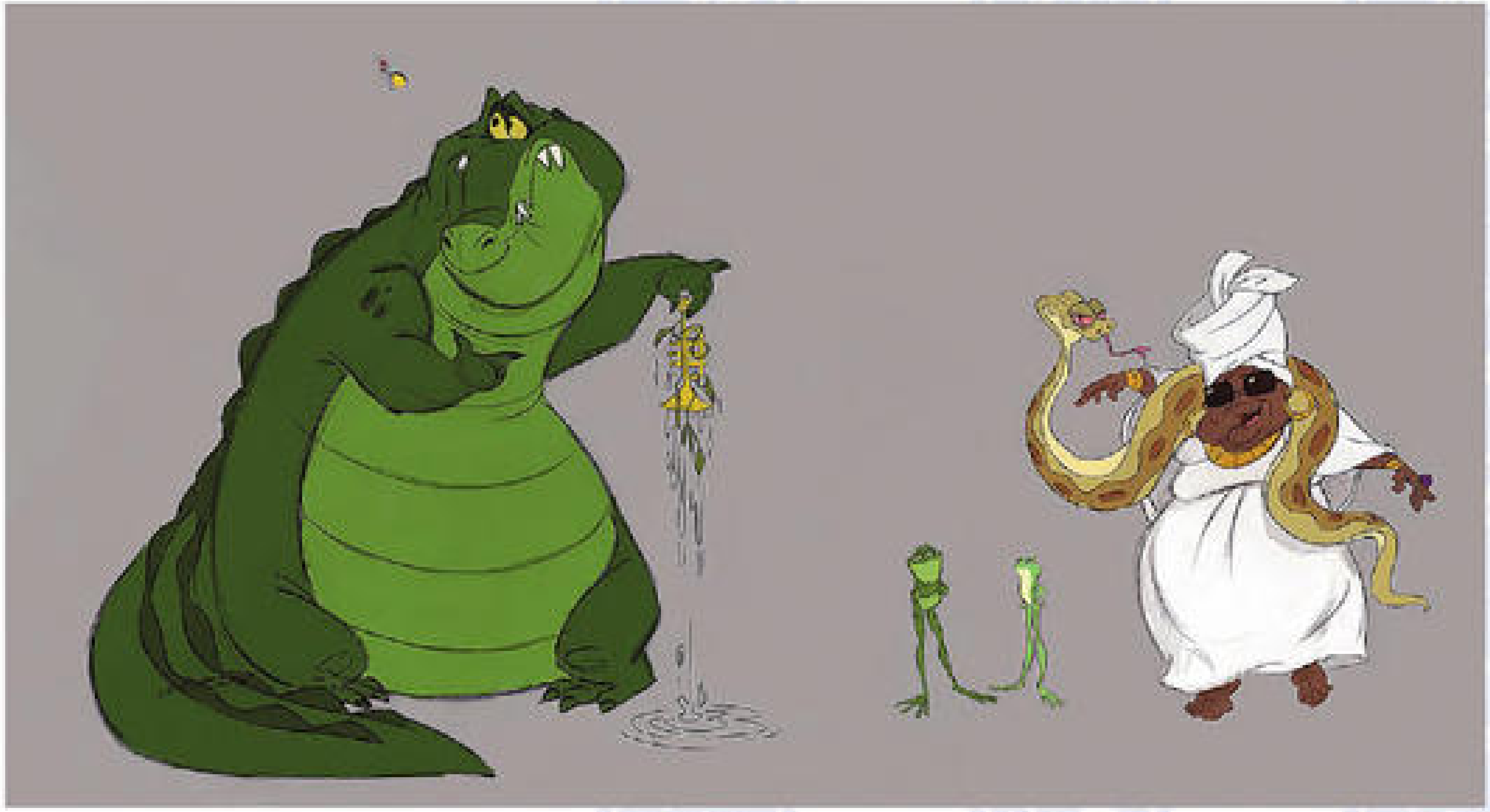
Rasoul Azadani recalls how the notion of scale affected a research trip to a South Carolina bayou. "When I went to the bayou, some parts had no water, so we could see the buildup of bayou from the ground up, we could see what the ground would look like, and you could see the watermarks, how the water would come in. So I was walking with my camera right on the ground, and taking snapshots from the point of view of the frogs."

Craig Elliot | digital



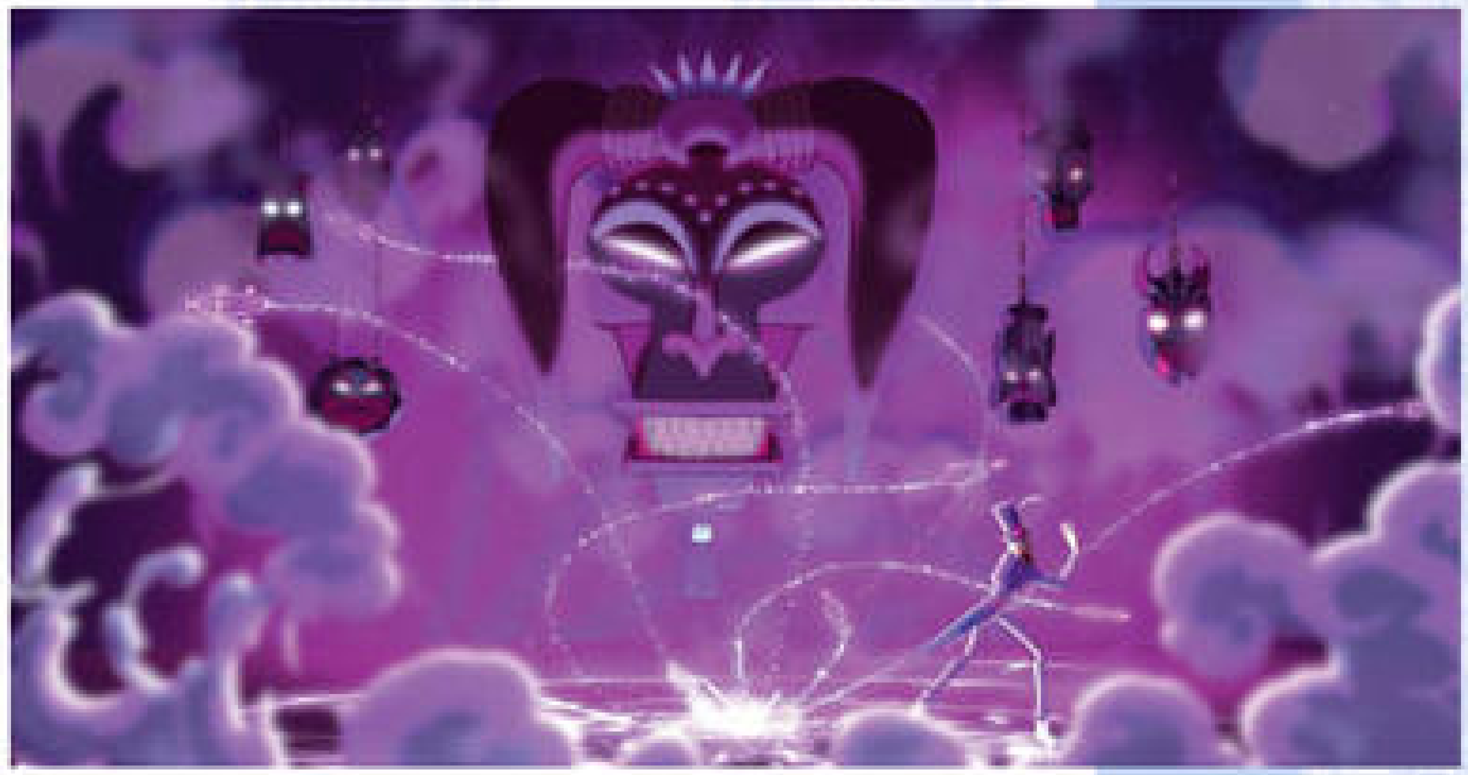


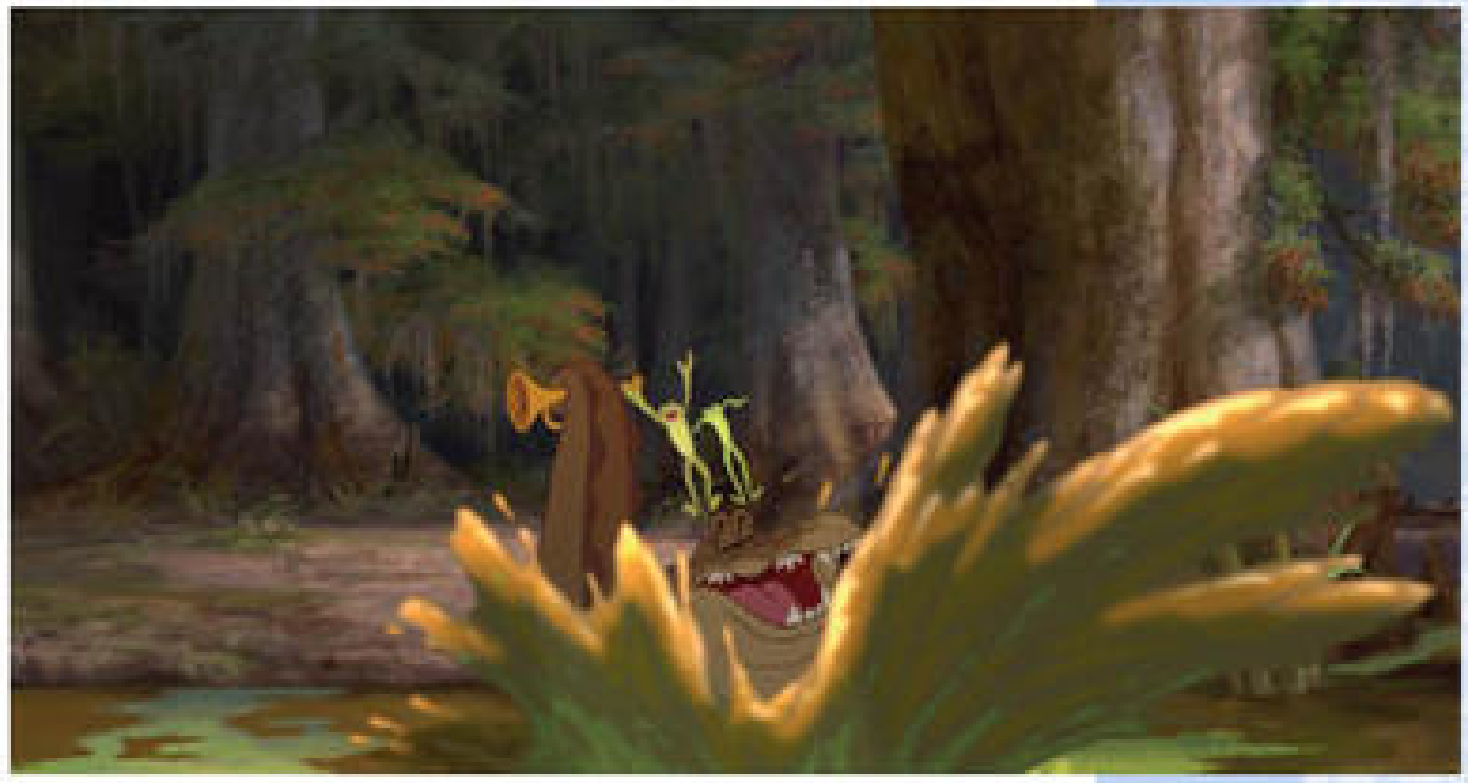
Craig Elliot | digital

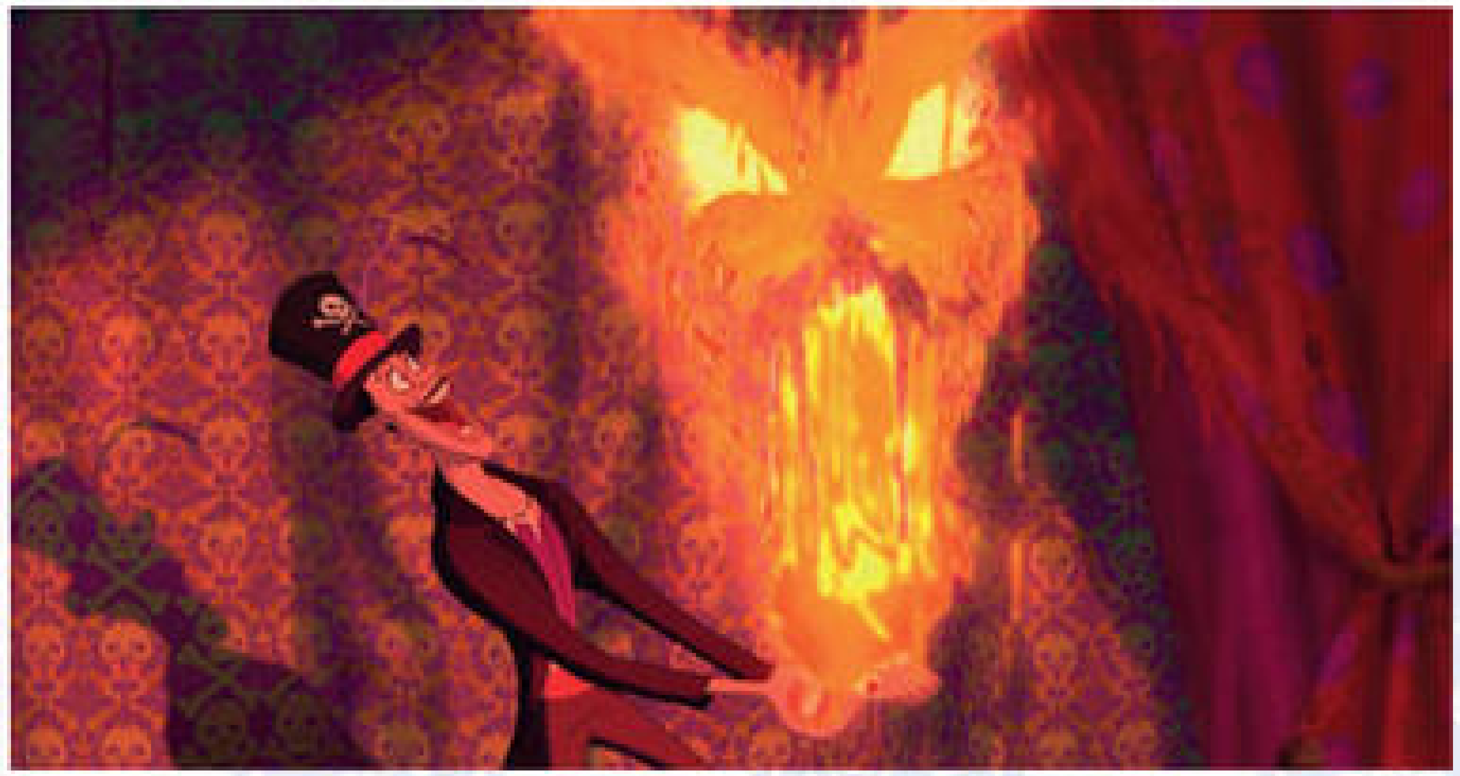


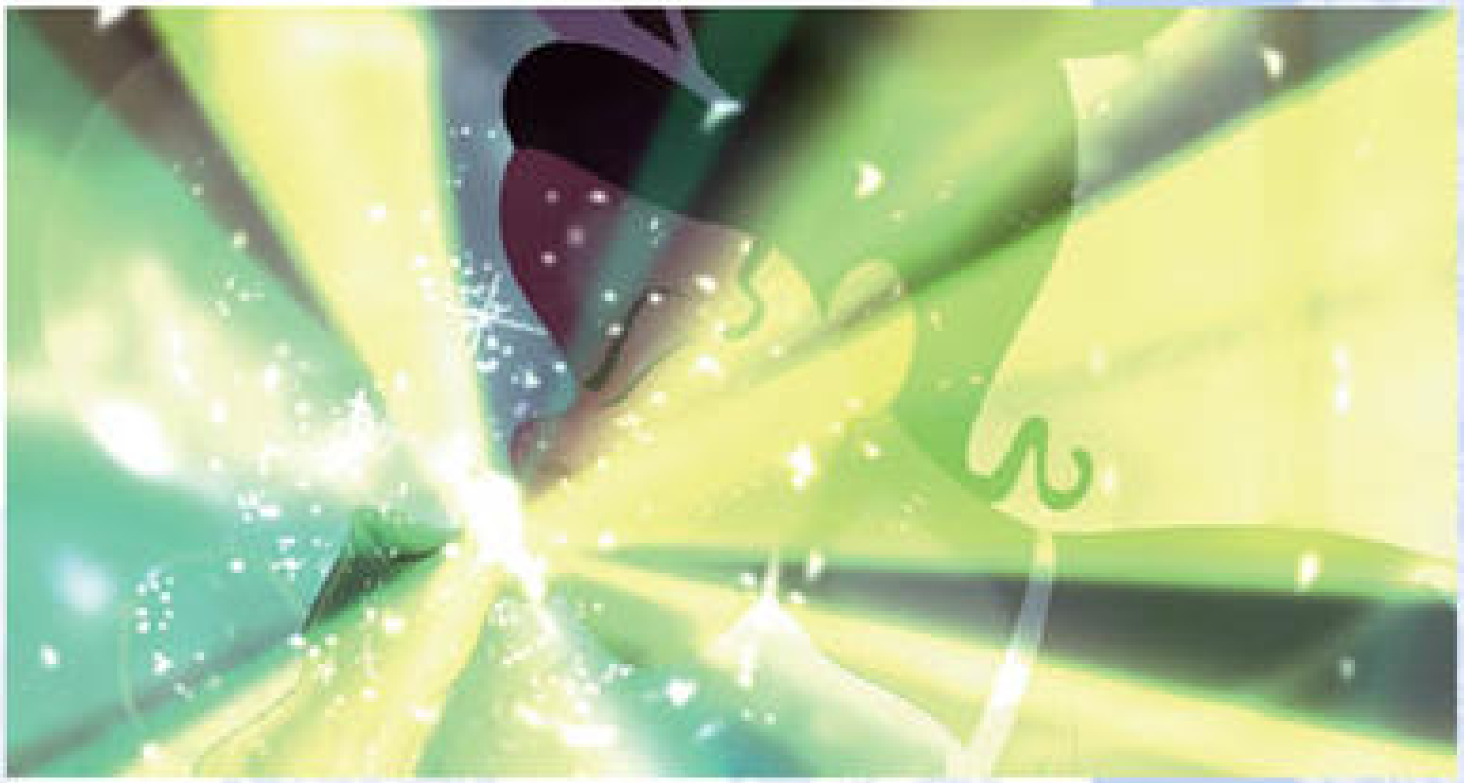
Size Comparison | **Bill Schwab** | graphite, digital

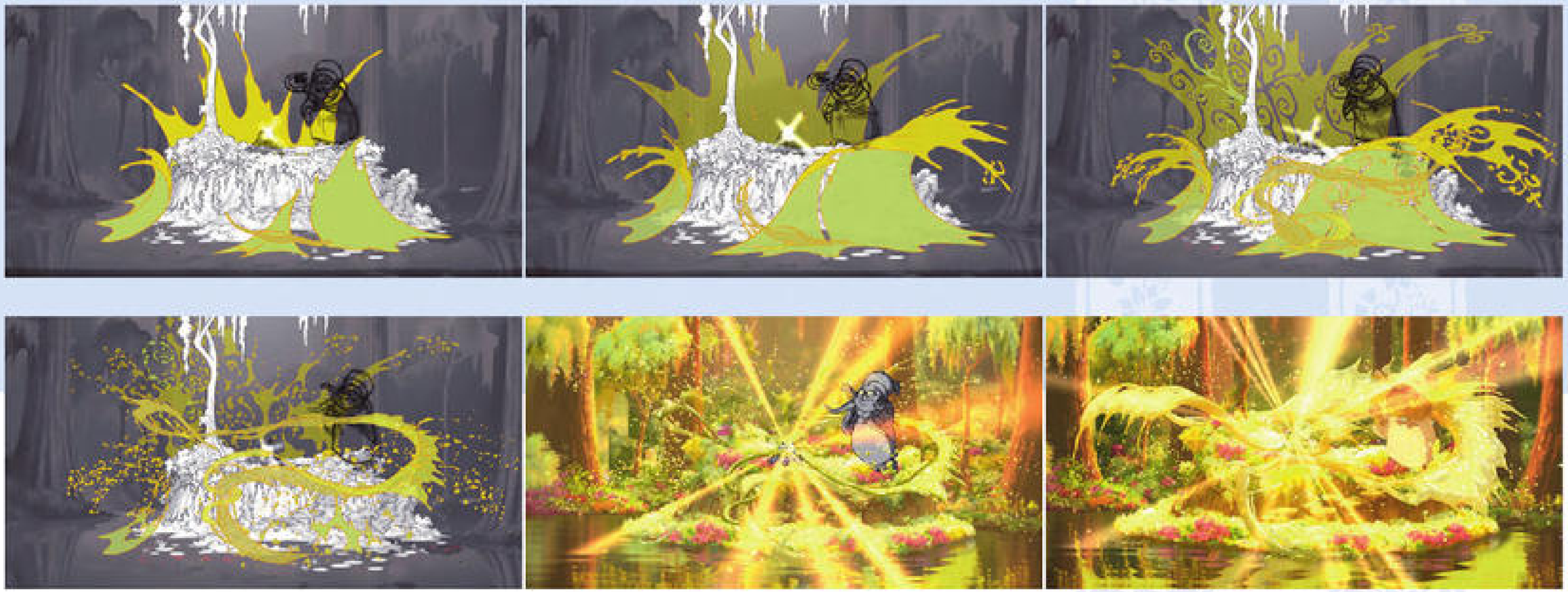
EFFECTS ANIMATION





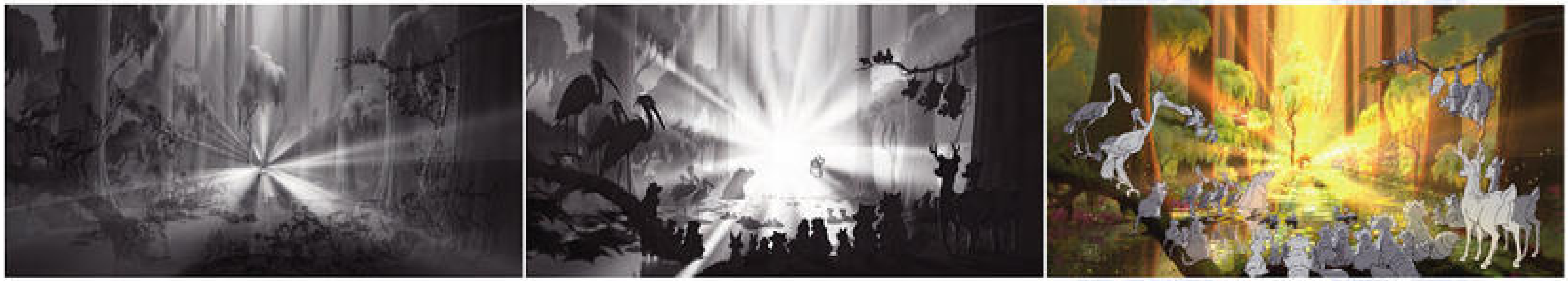




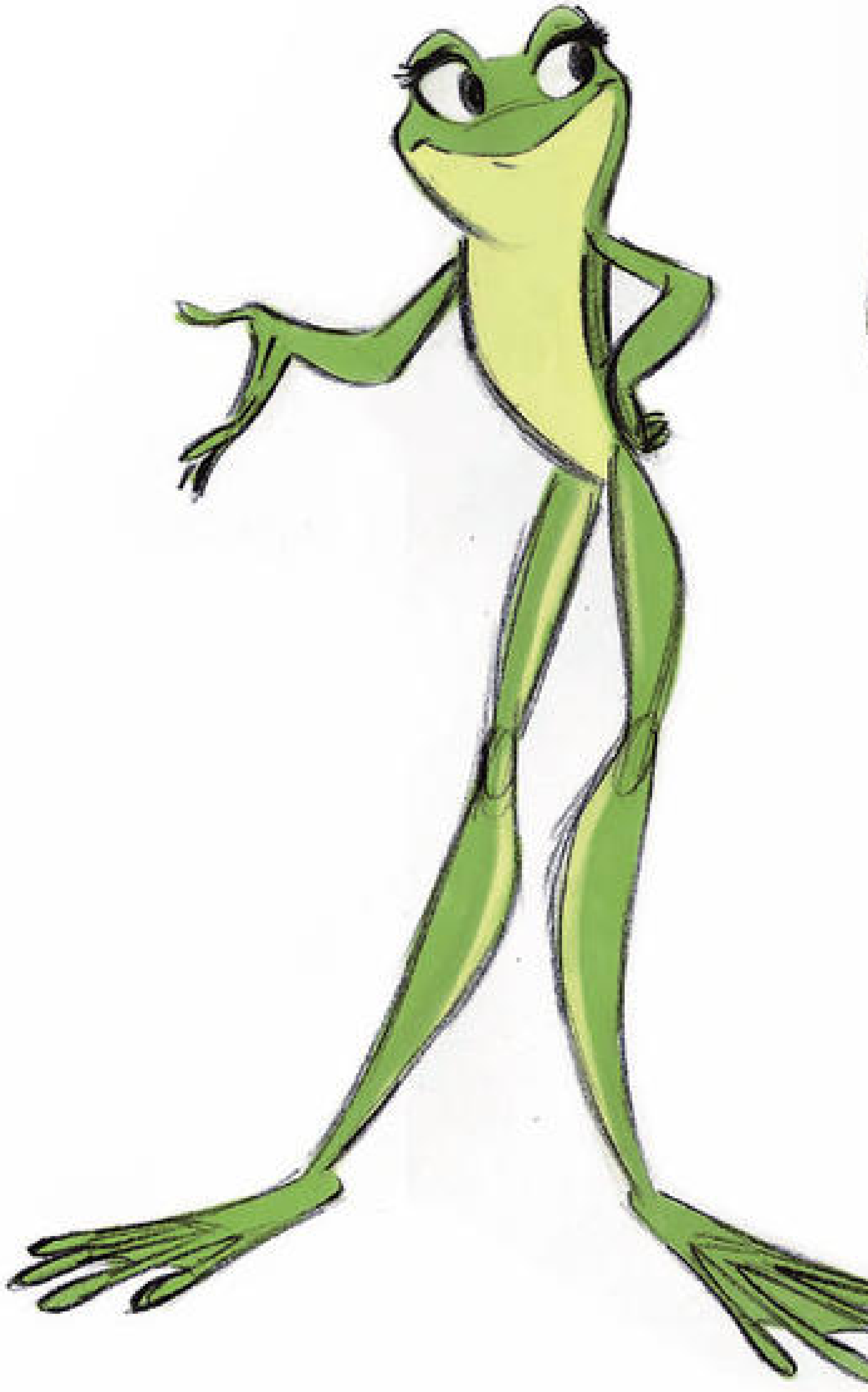


Dan Lund | digital

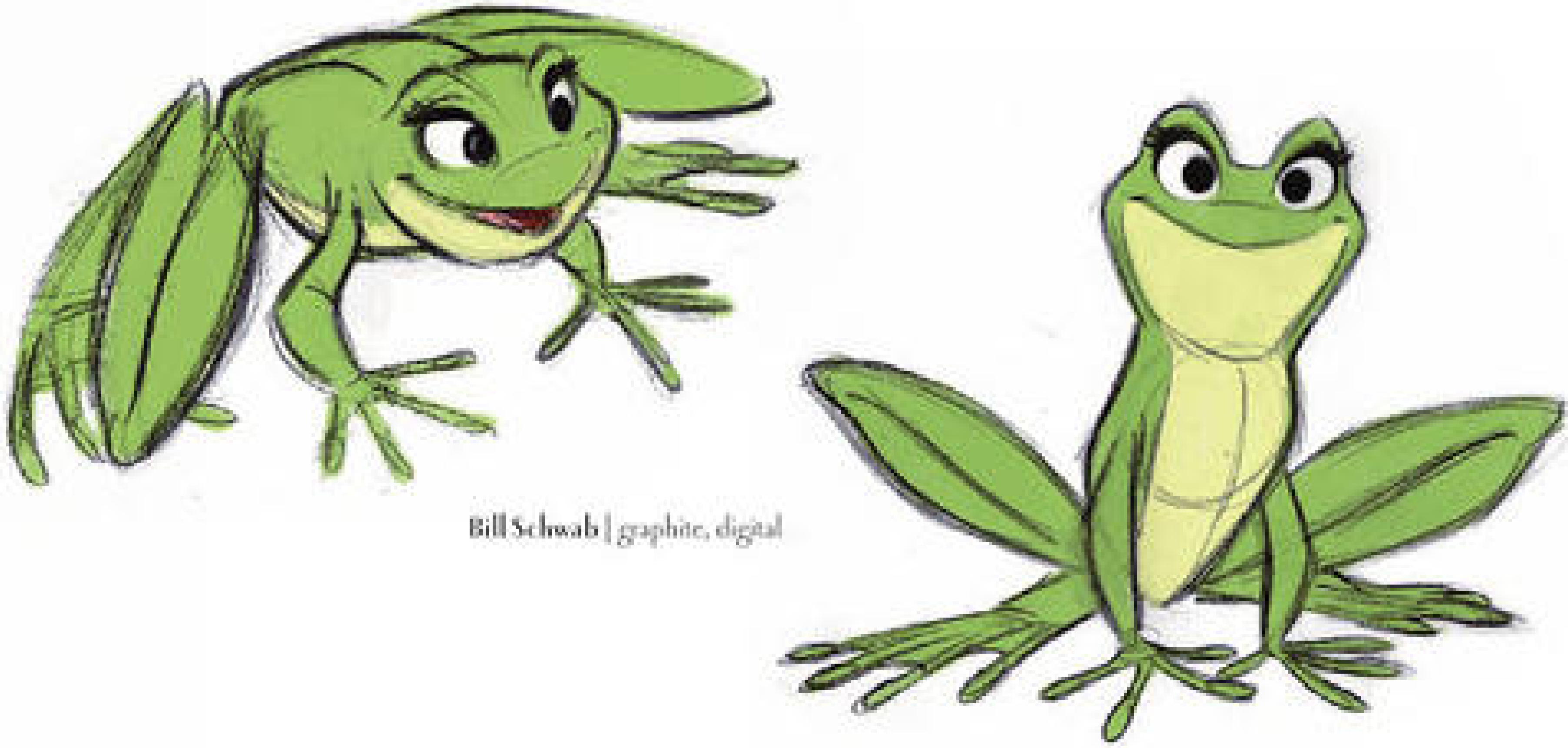
"No one's going to say 'That dust cloud brought tears to my eyes.' But that cloud needs to be there to make the action look realistic."
—Marlon West, head of Effects Animation



Robert Bennett | digital



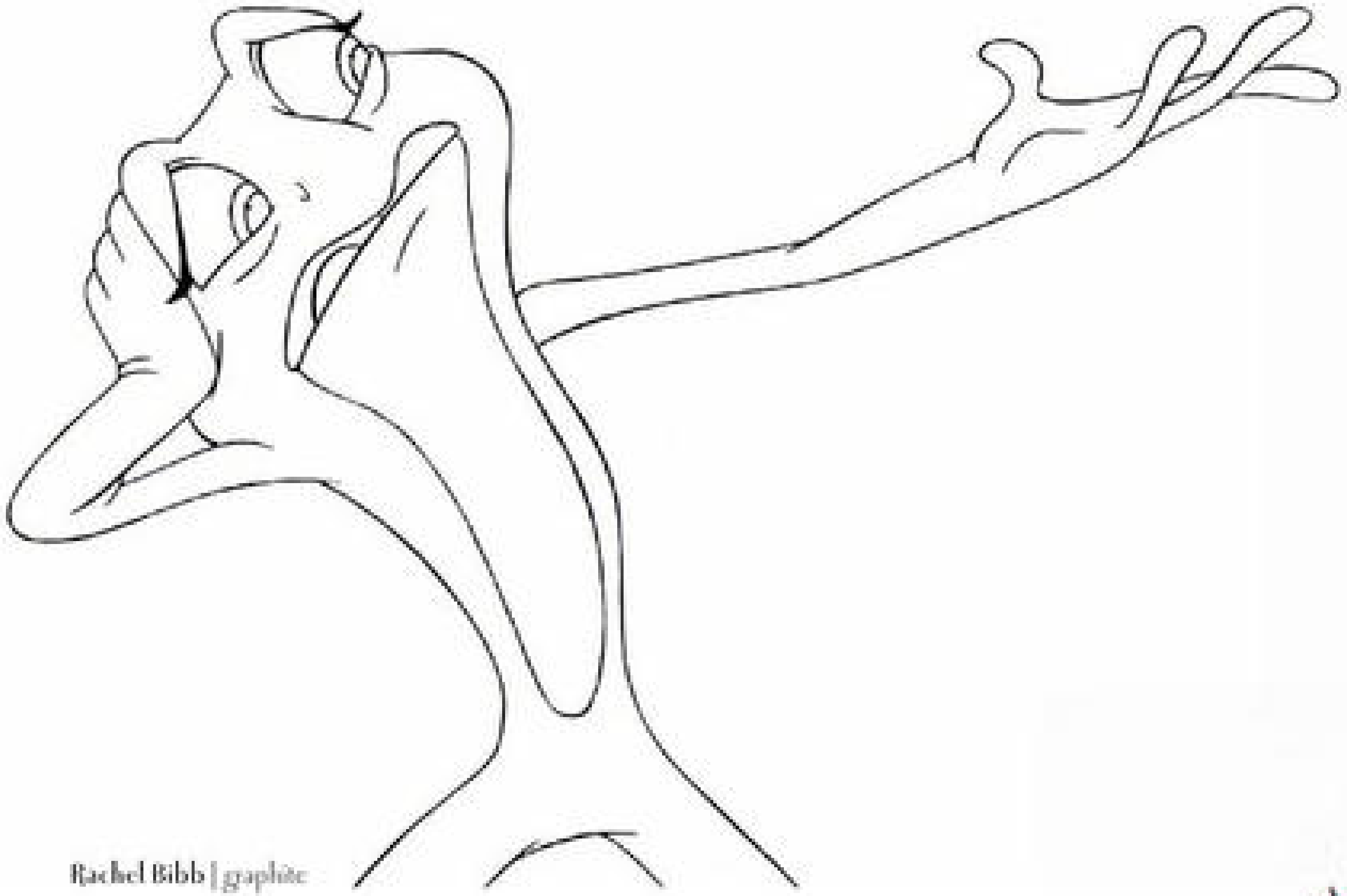
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



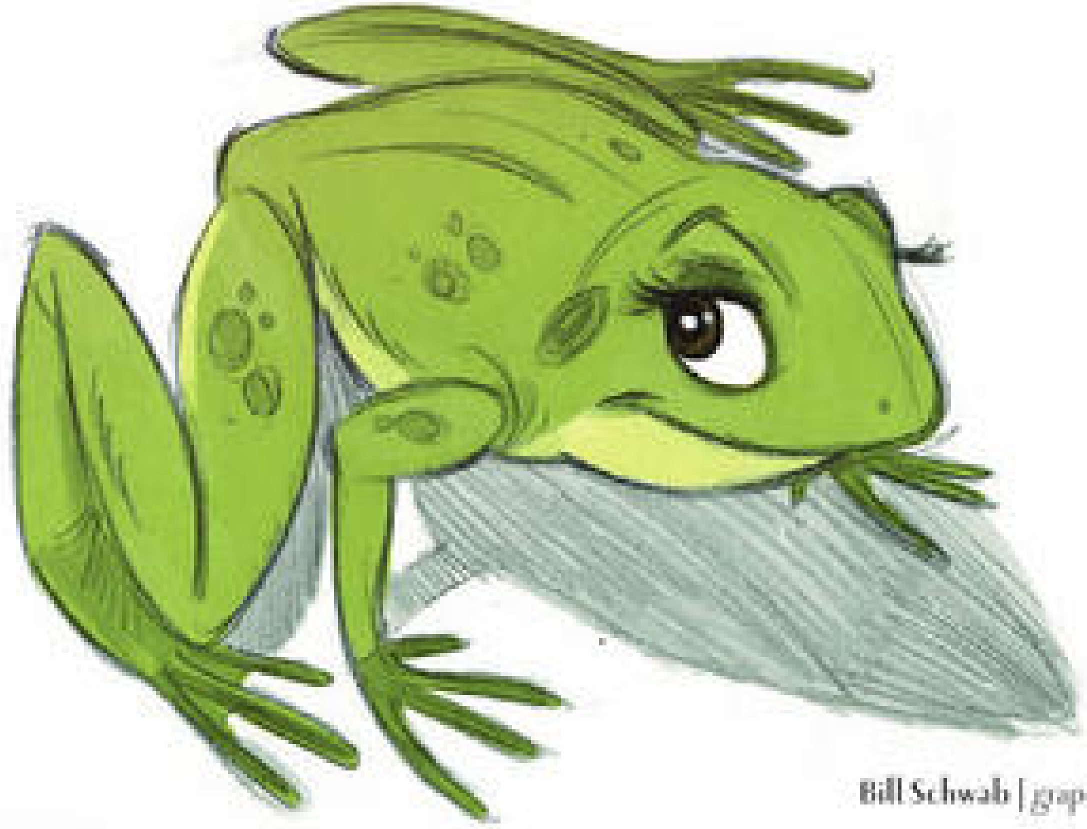
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

FROG TIANA

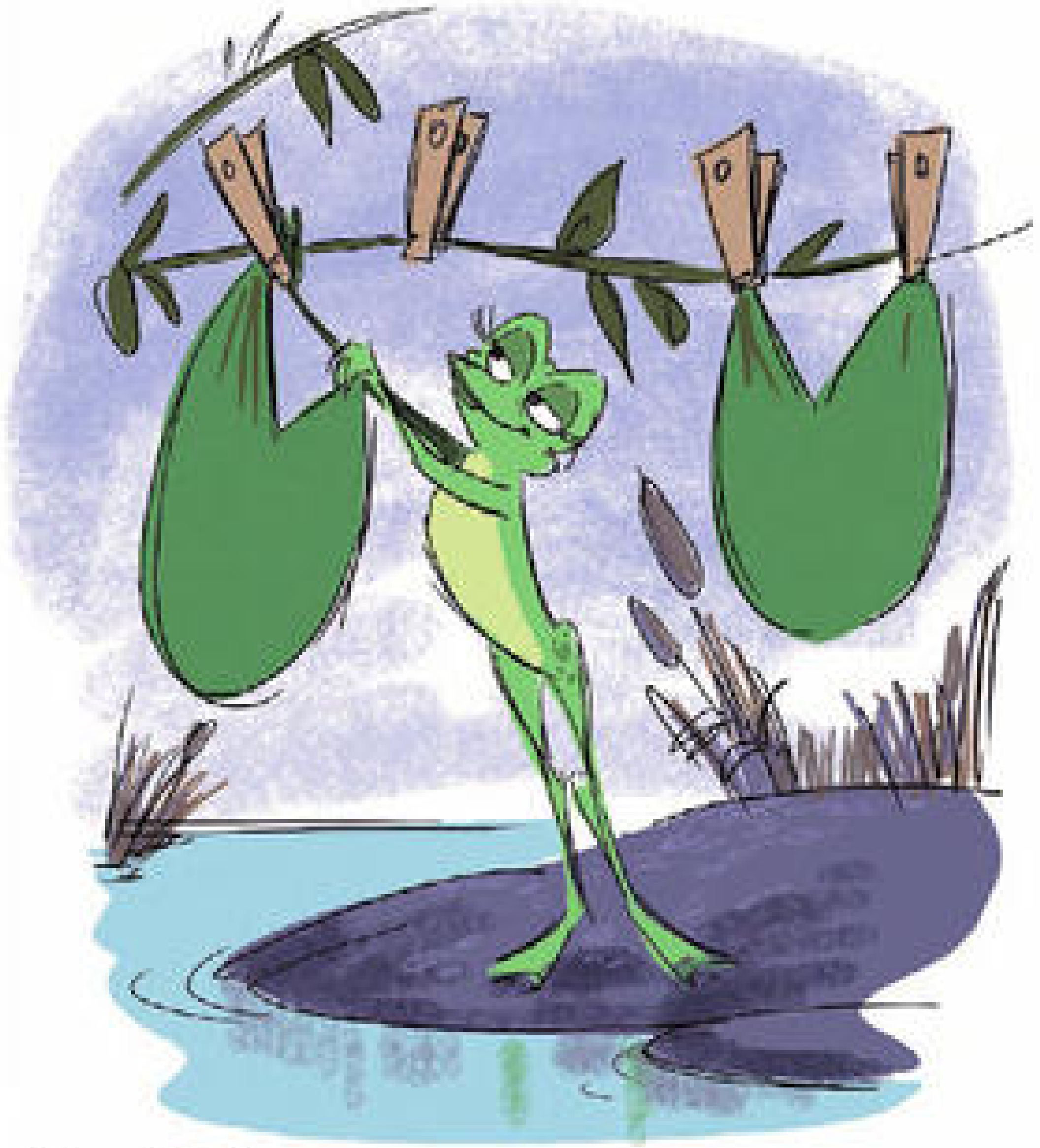
For the frogs, part of both supervising animators Mark Henn and Randy Haycock's performances were to create the same identifiable personality in two distinct physical incarnations. "It has to be the same person throughout," Henn says. "They just literally change skin, or body. Even when she is a frog, I can actually do some similar mannerisms and expressions that we've seen in her human form. So I don't think of her character any differently in terms of performance, other than the body is changed. She was human, now she's a frog. I also want to blend them, and be true to some of the elements and characteristics that make a frog a frog. I can have some fun with that, but it's a real challenge."



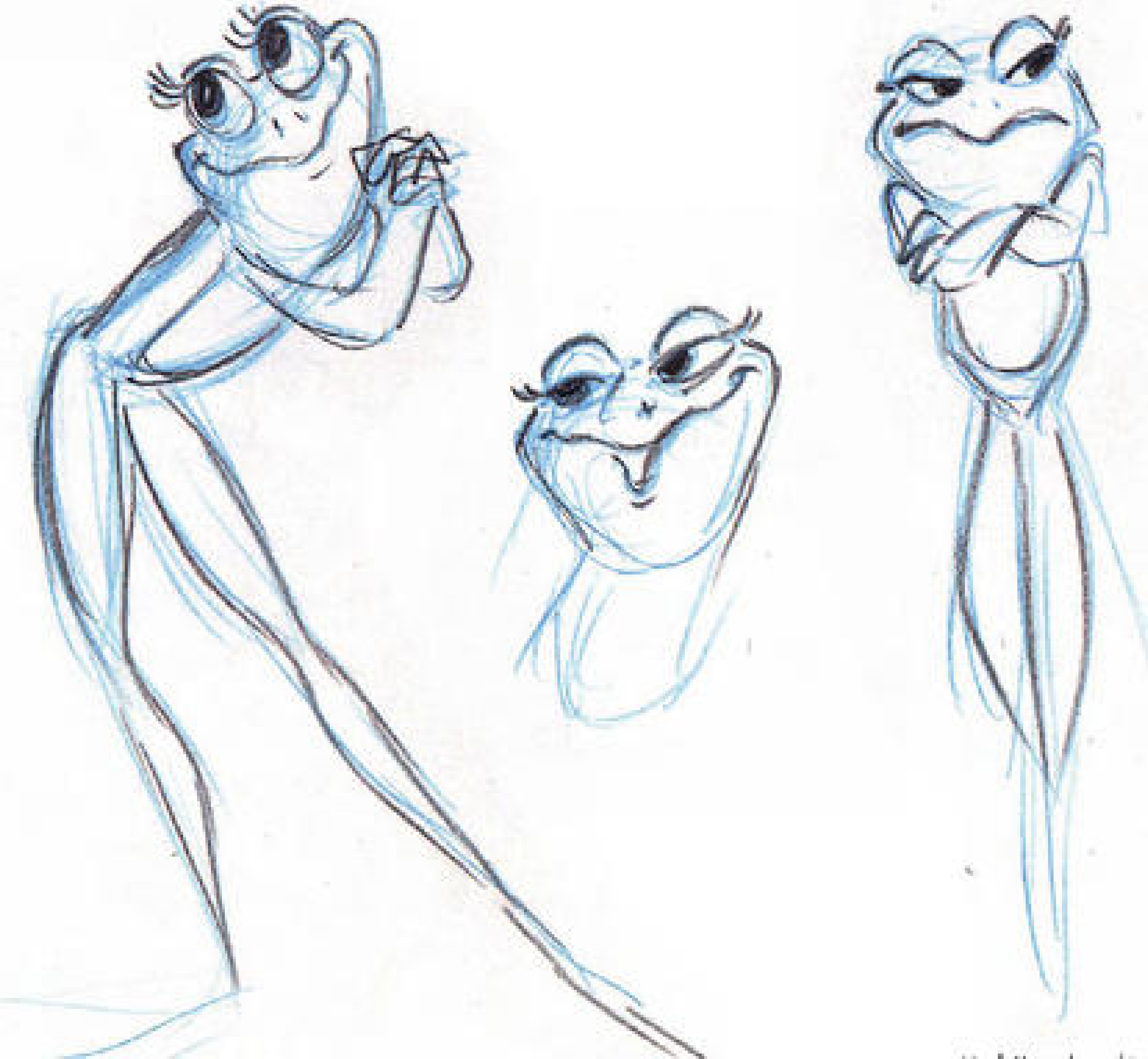
Rachel Bibb | graphite



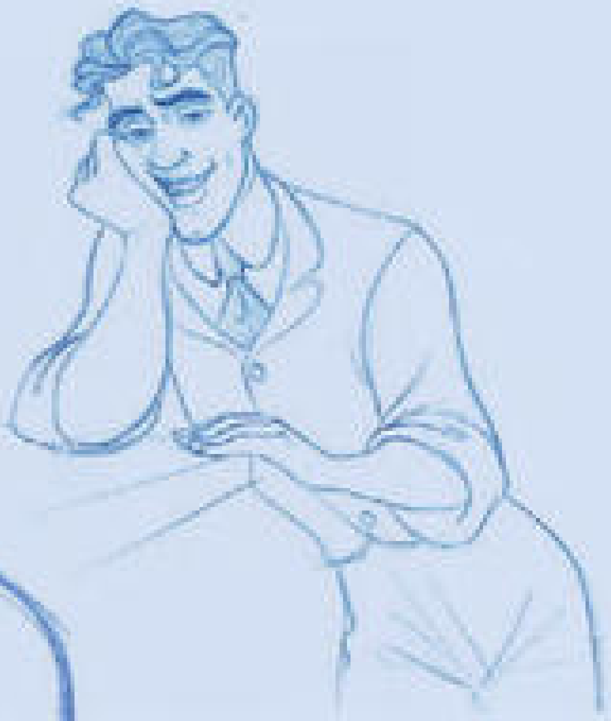
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



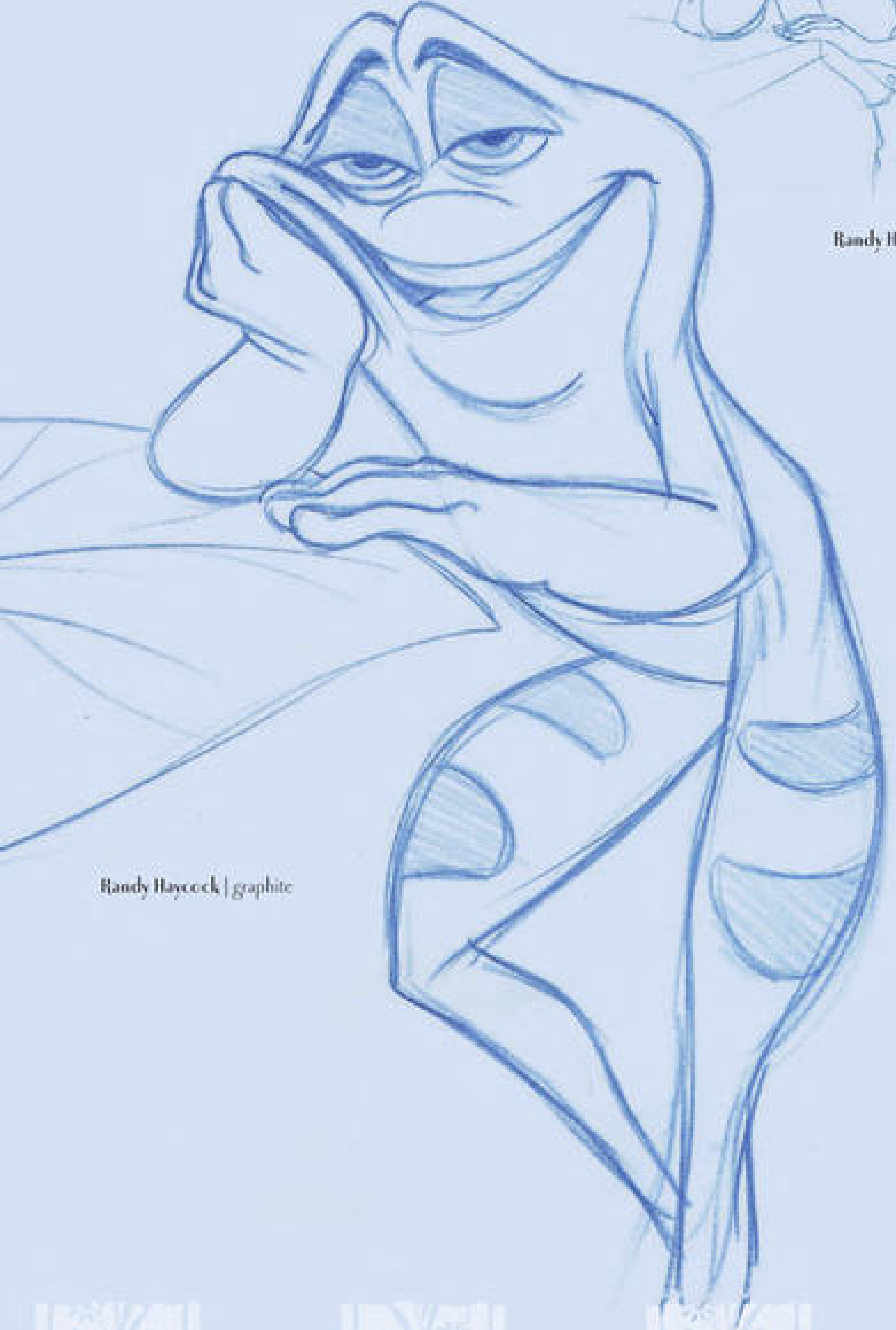
Stevie Weimers | digital



Mark Henn | graphite



Randy Haycock | graphite

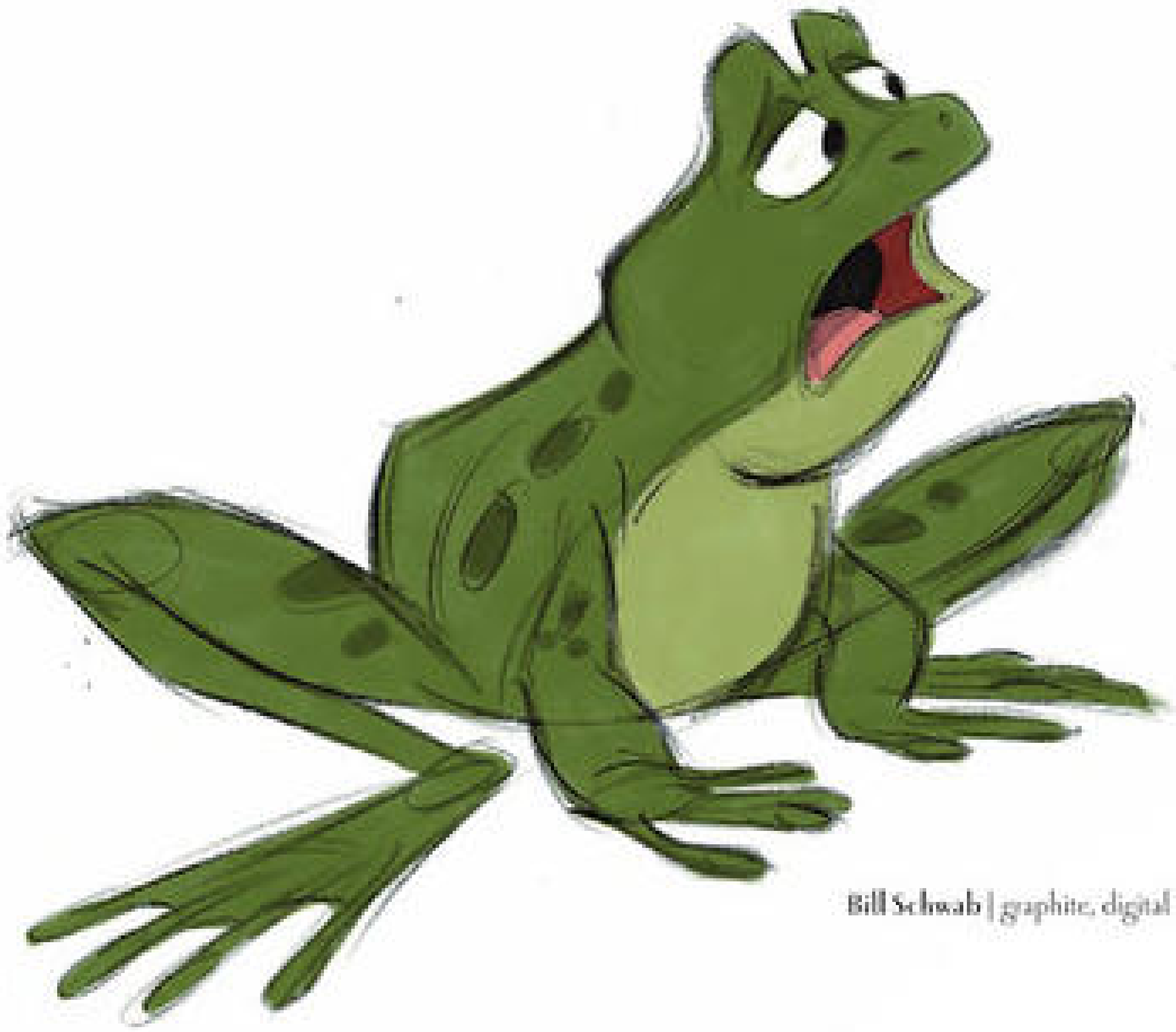


Randy Haycock | graphite

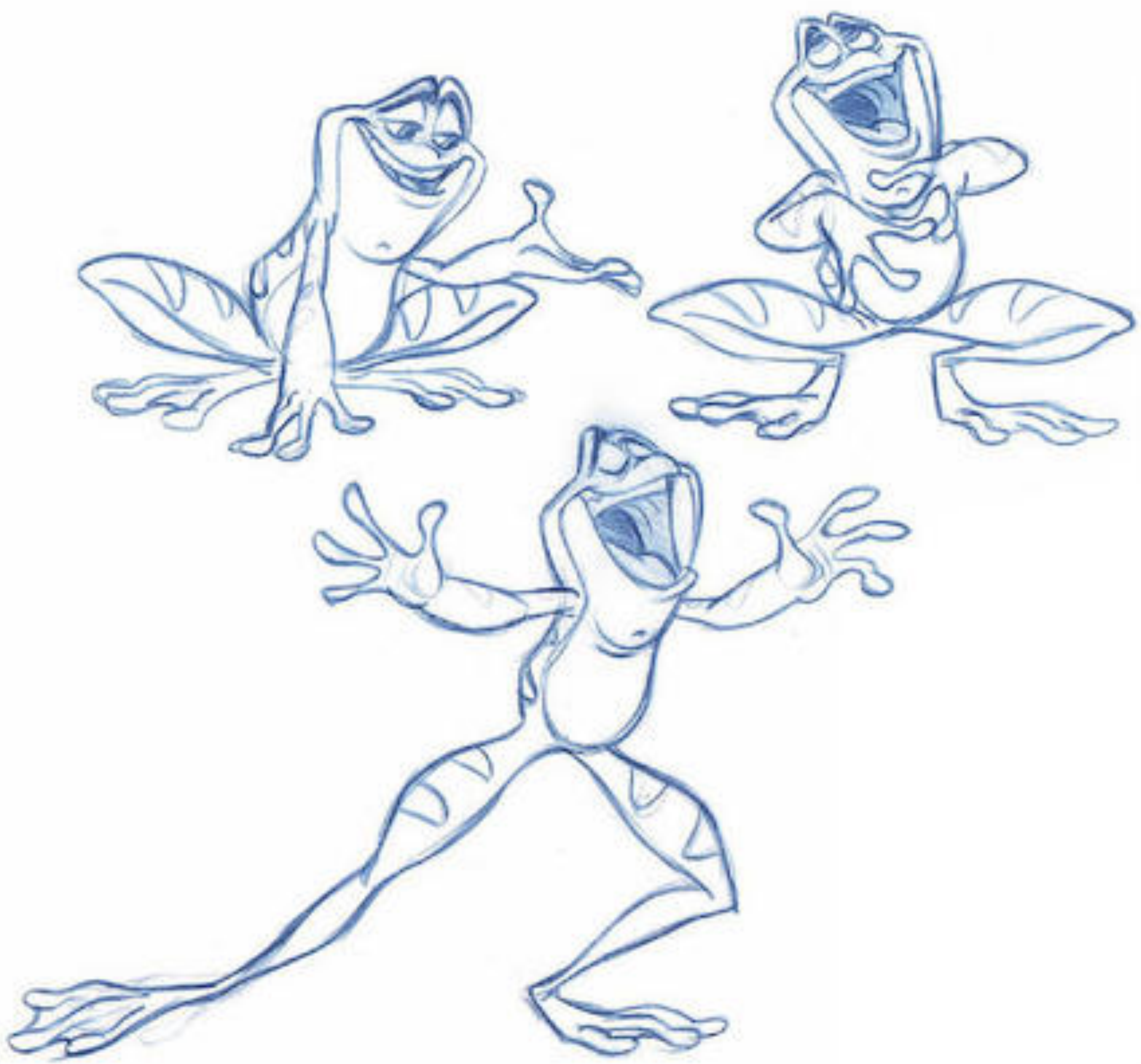
FROG NAVEEN

The transformation from a handsome and suave young man into a frog of questionable appeal might affect anyone quite negatively. Not so with Naveen.

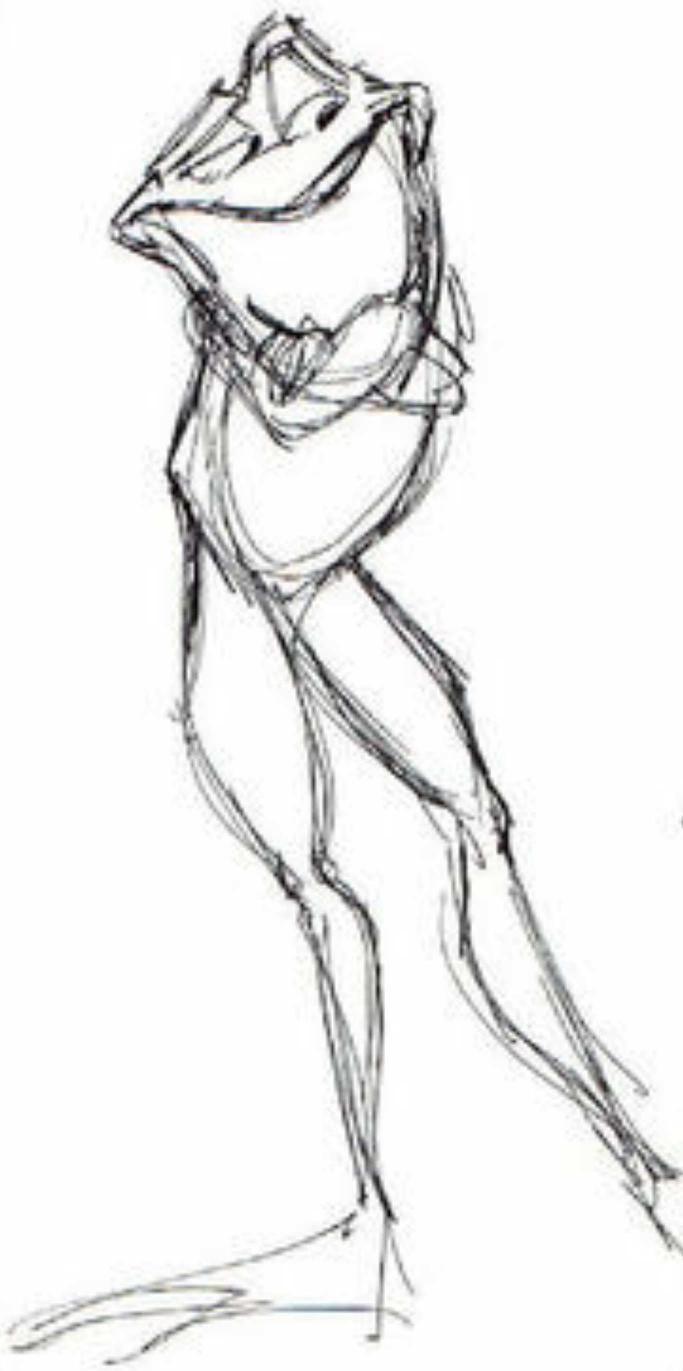
"I mean, as frogs go, I think he's a pretty good-looking frog, I guess," says supervising animator Randy Haycock. "Compared to what he was as a human, he's kind of goofy-looking, but he still thinks of himself as a good-looking guy. So when he meets the girl and it's a pretty princess? Well, of course she's going to want to kiss him, because he's Naveen, right? 'Girls love me, you know?' His personality adds another layer because he is a frog that still thinks he's irresistable to women."



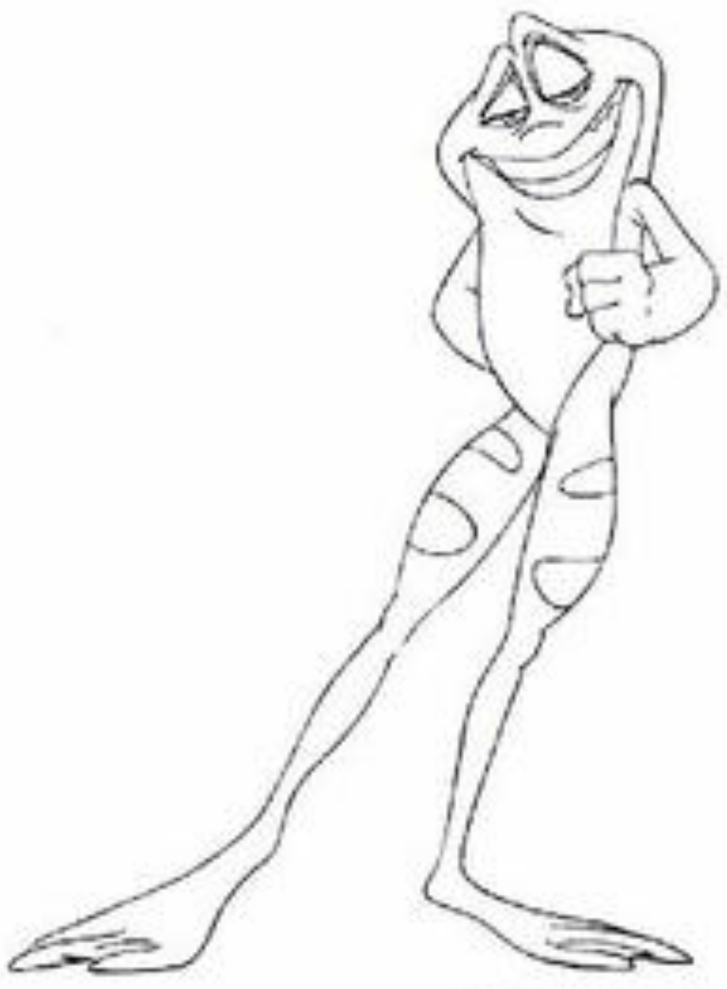
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



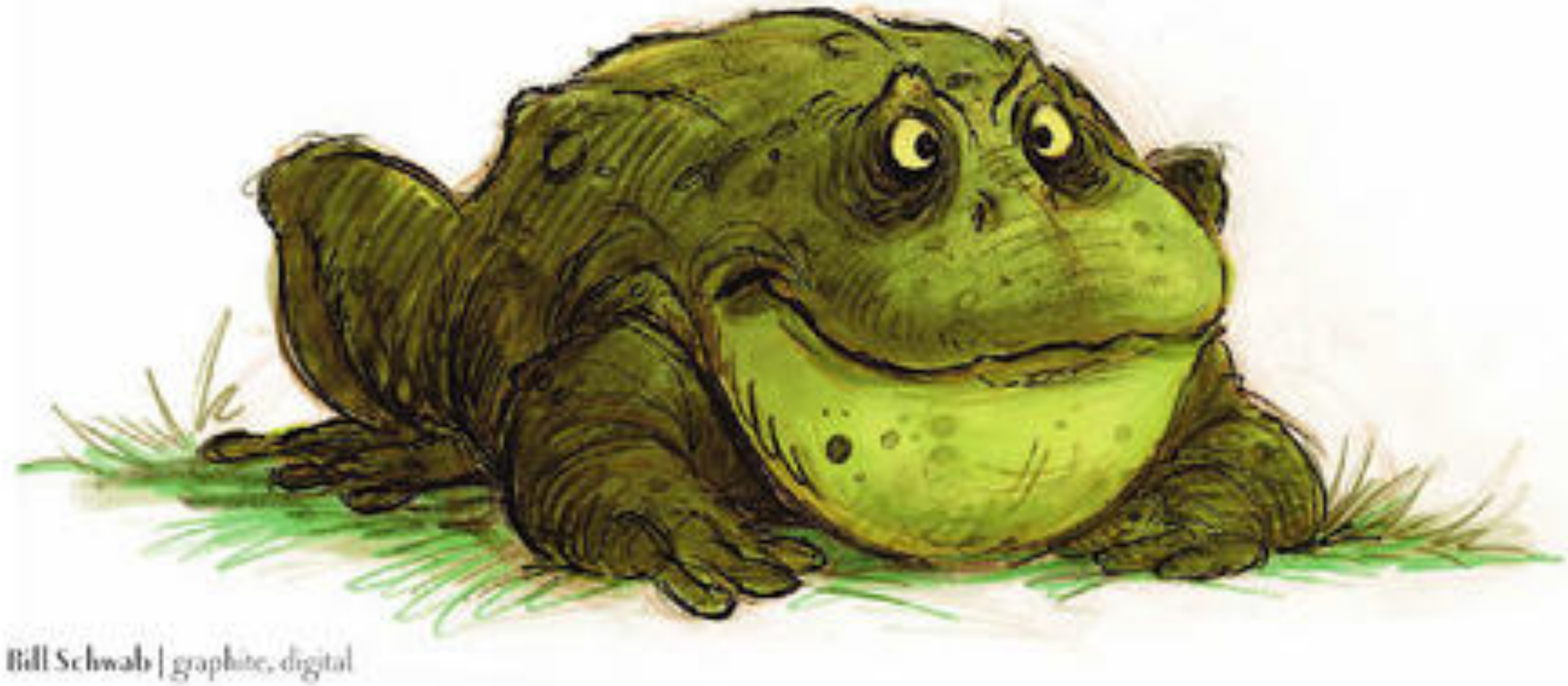
Randy Haycock | graphite



Eric Goldberg | pen

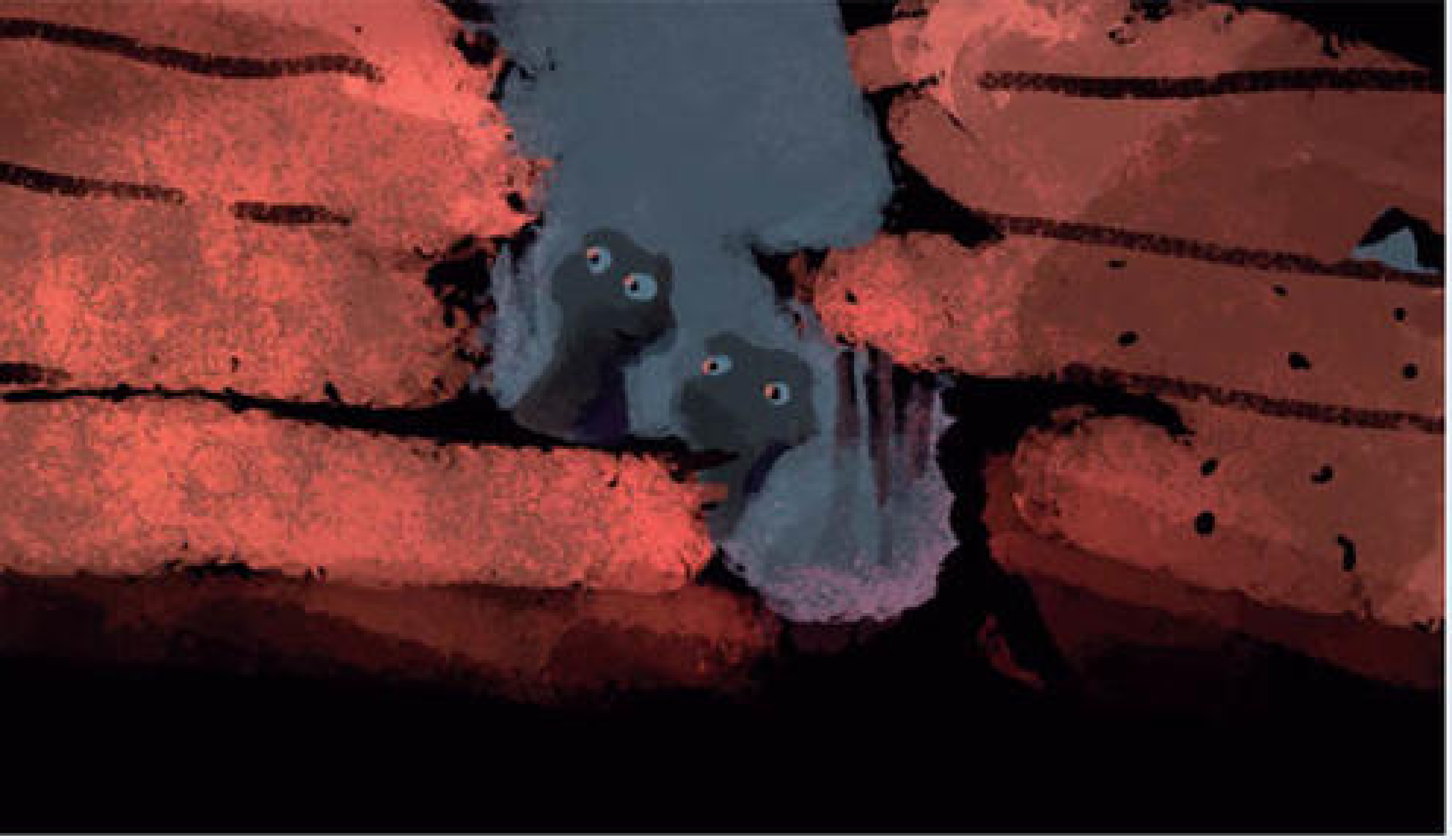


Dan Tanaka | graphite

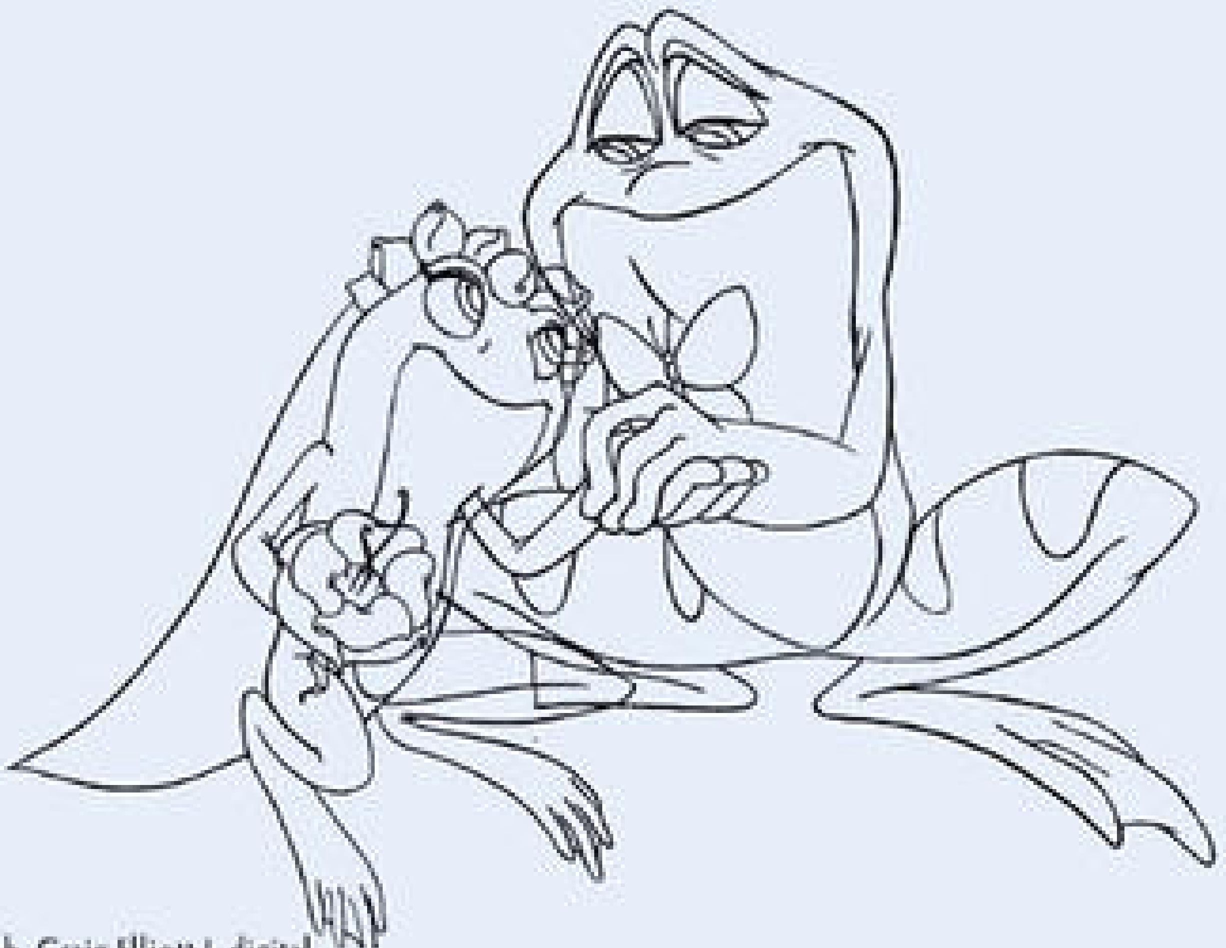


Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

"It's hard to believe that it's been over 20 years since my first experience at Disney, working with Ron and John on *The Great Mouse Detective* and *The Little Mermaid*. It's an honor and a privilege to work with them again. They understand so well how important clean-up is in the process of making every nuance of the animator's work translate properly on screen. If there ever was a team to revitalize hand drawn animation, it would be them."
—DAN TANAKA, lead key

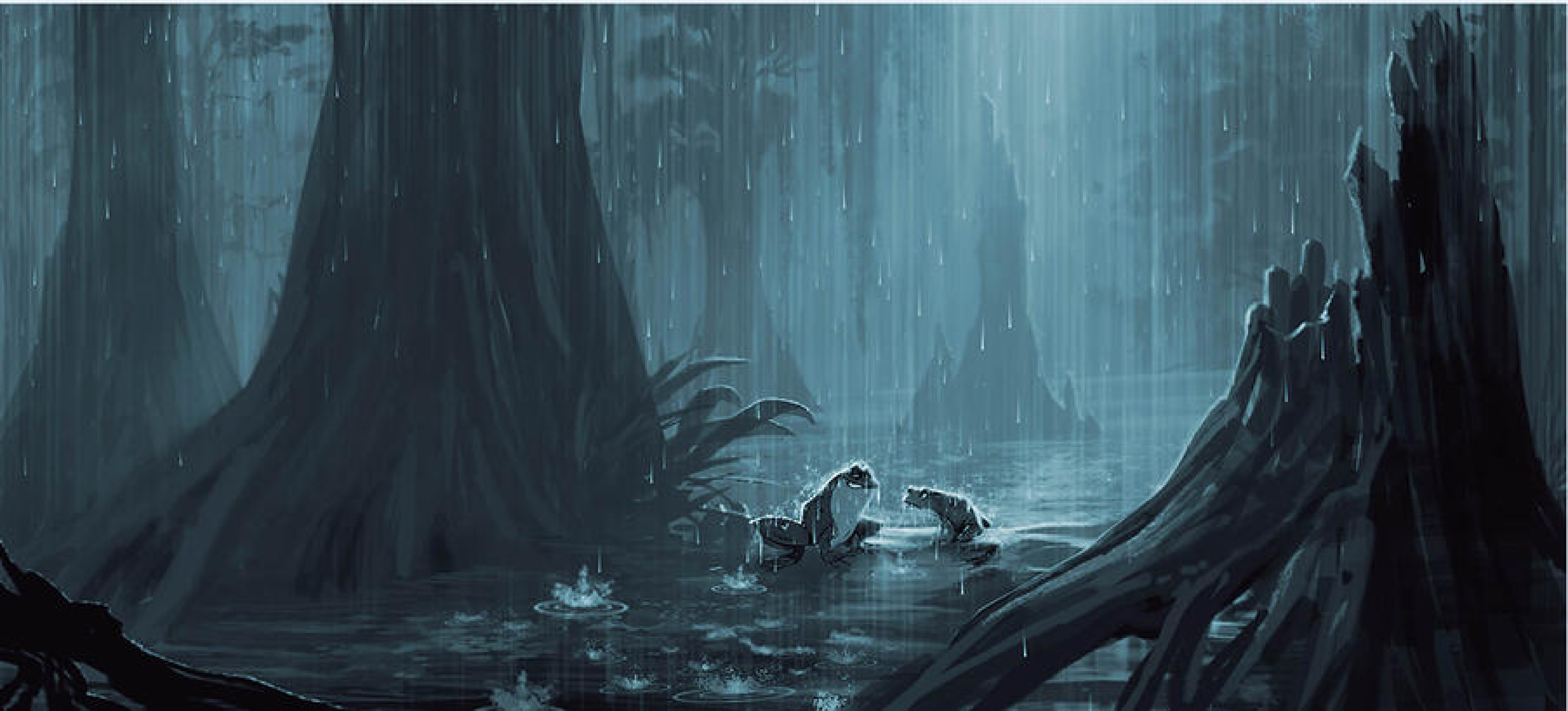


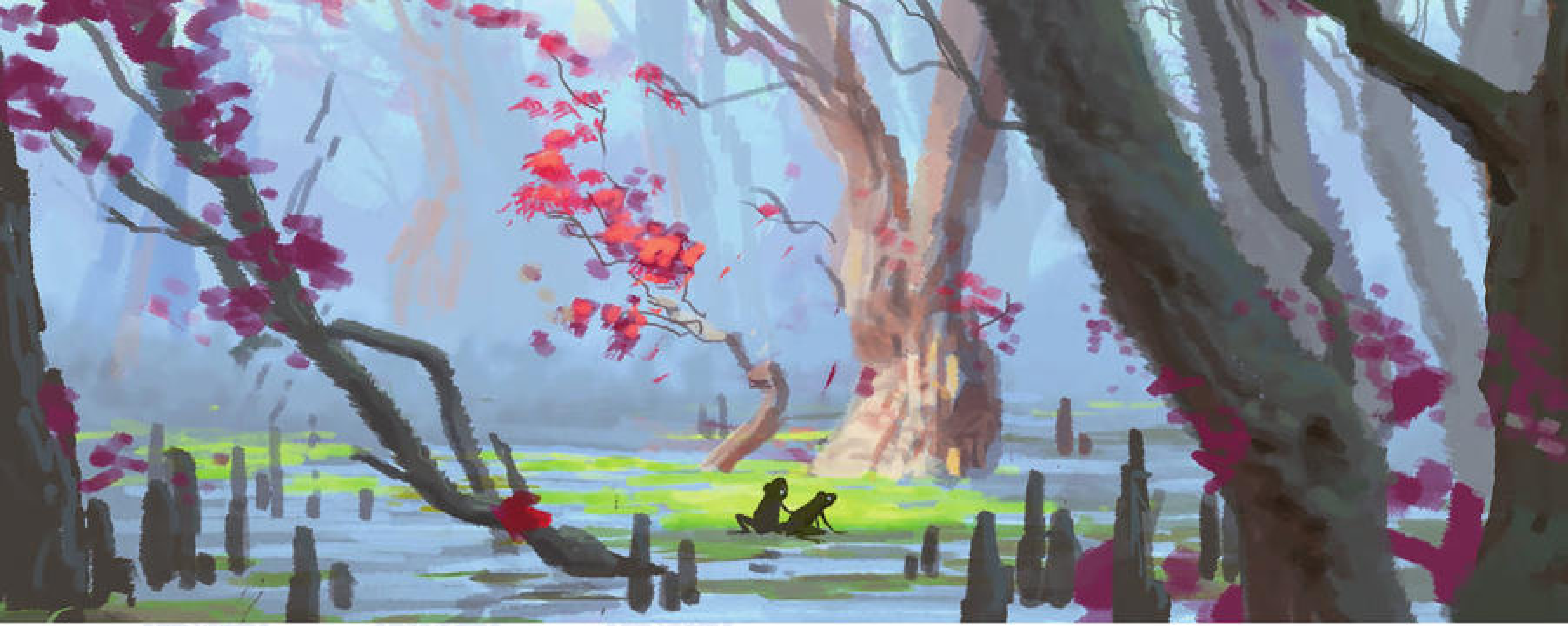
Dan Tanaka | *graphite*



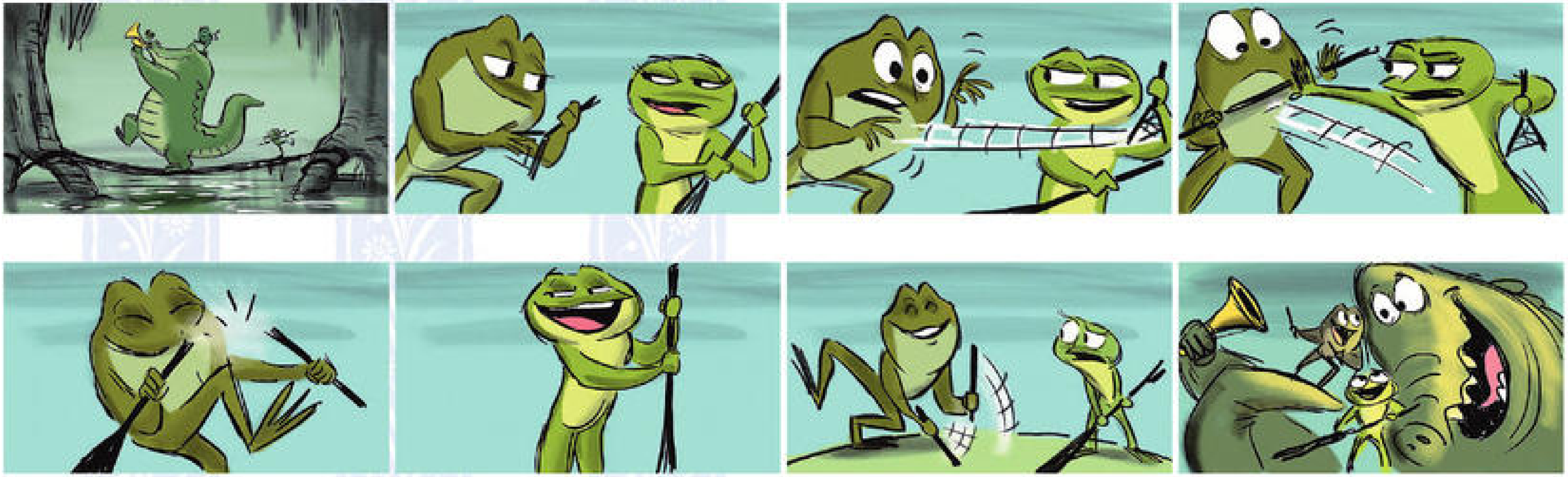
Rachel Bibb, Craig Elliott | digital

Armand Baltazar | digital

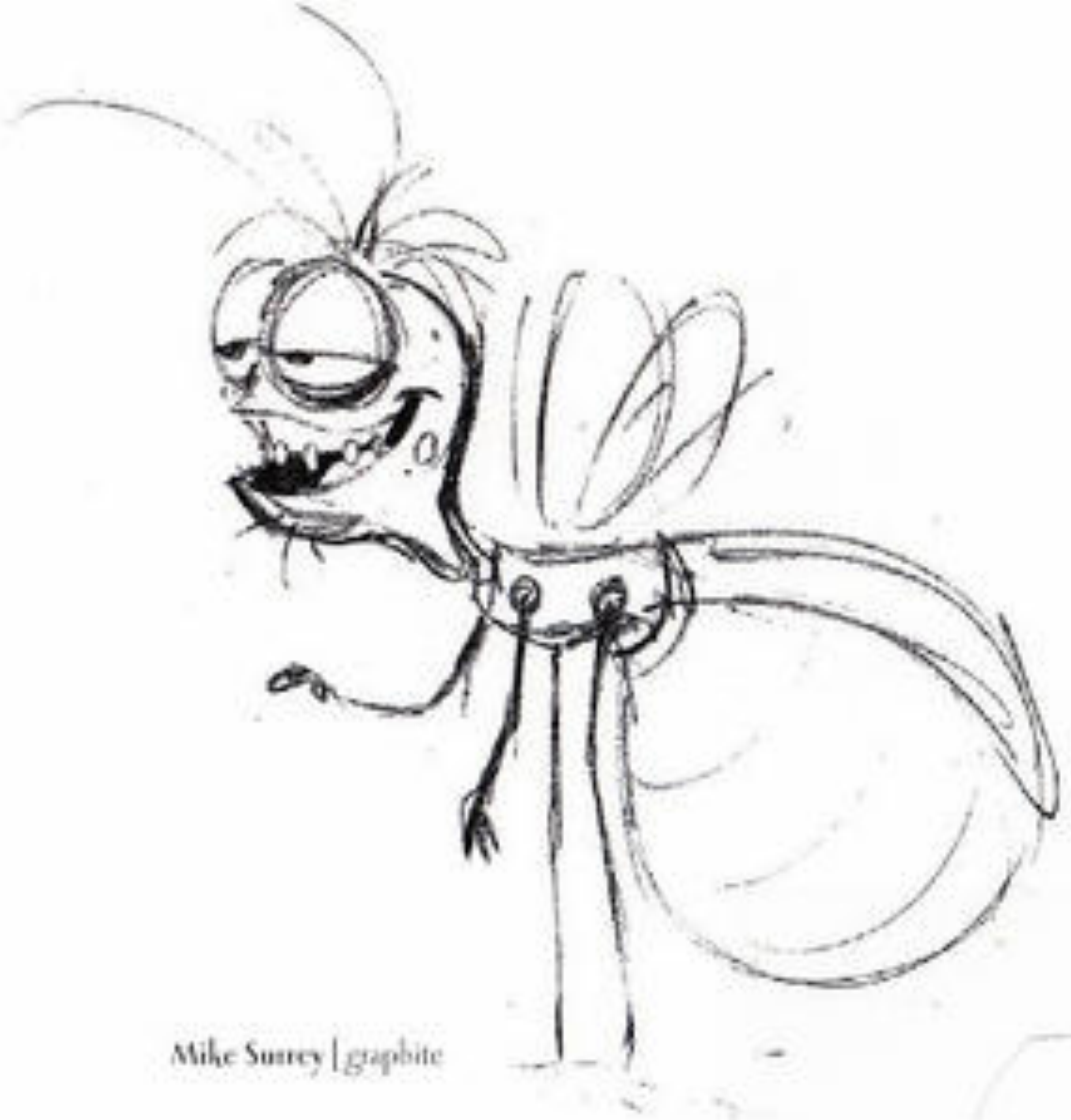




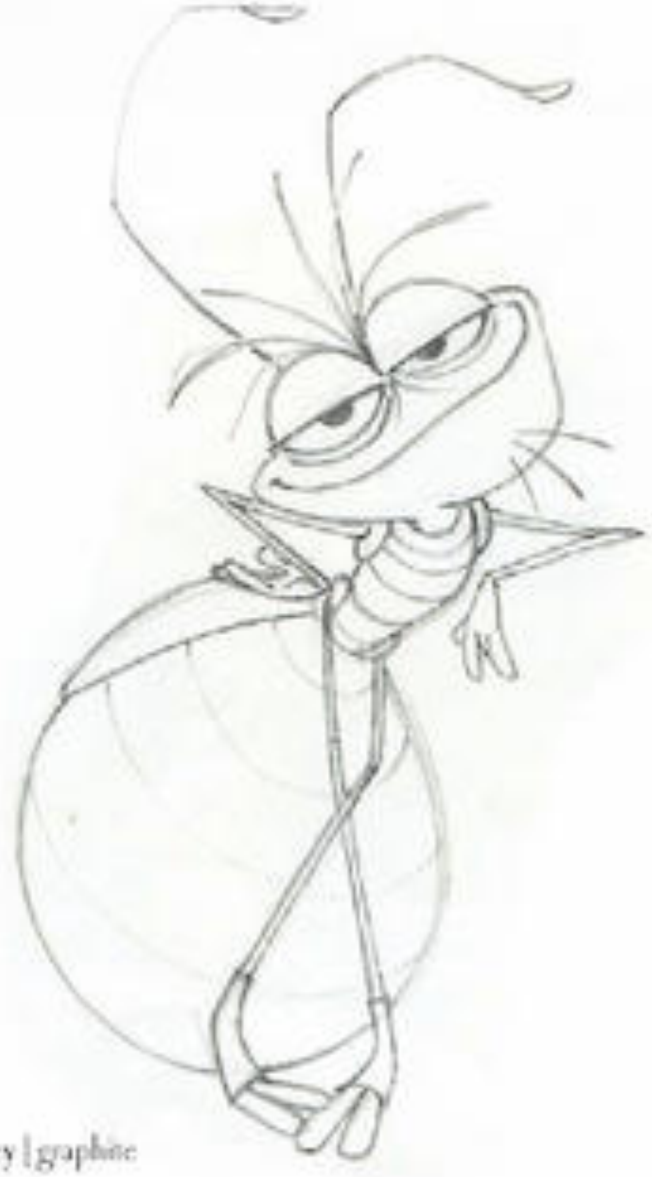
Craig Elliott | digital



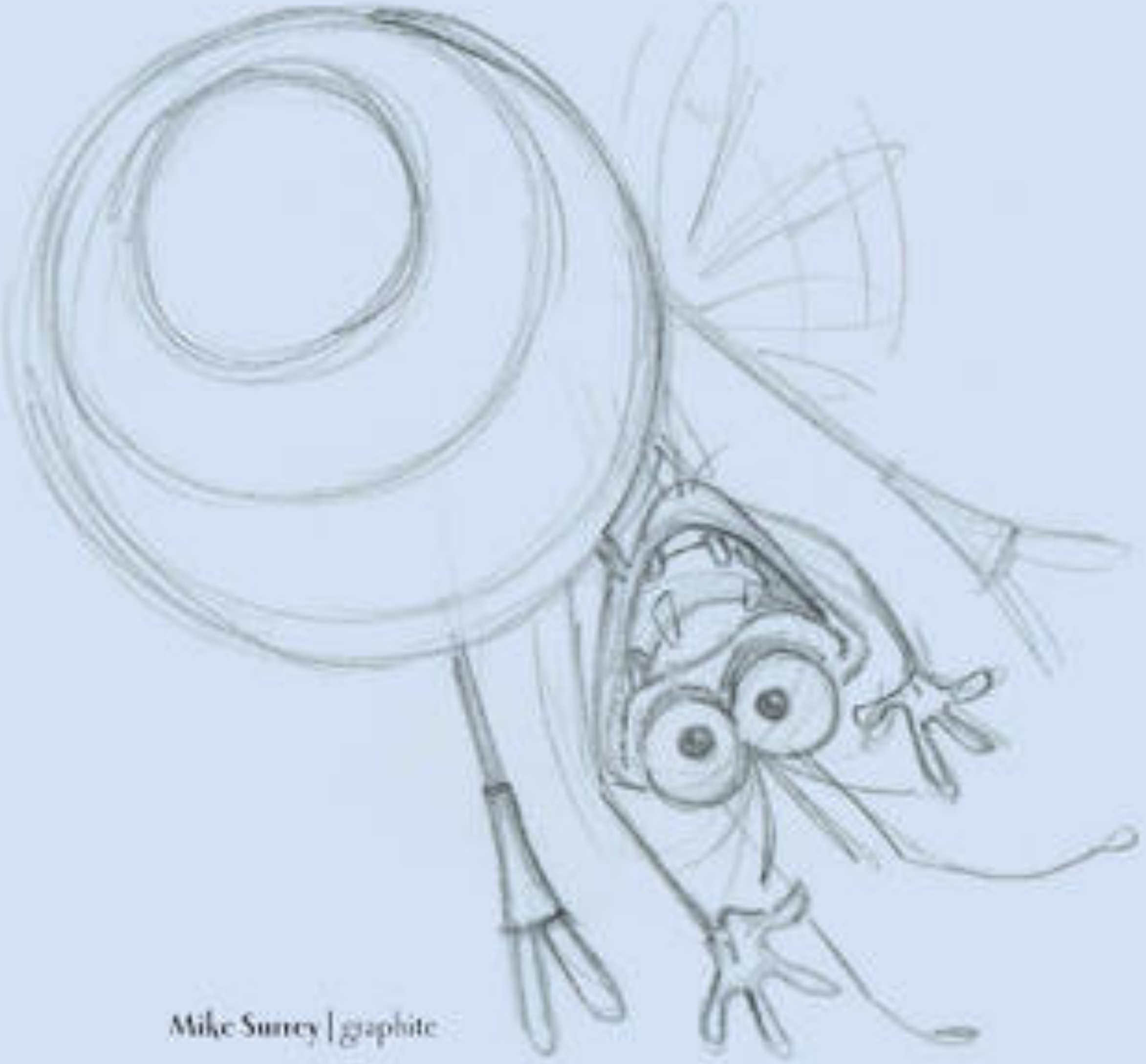
Storyboards | Jeremy Spears | digital



Mike Surrey | graphite



Mike Surrey | graphite



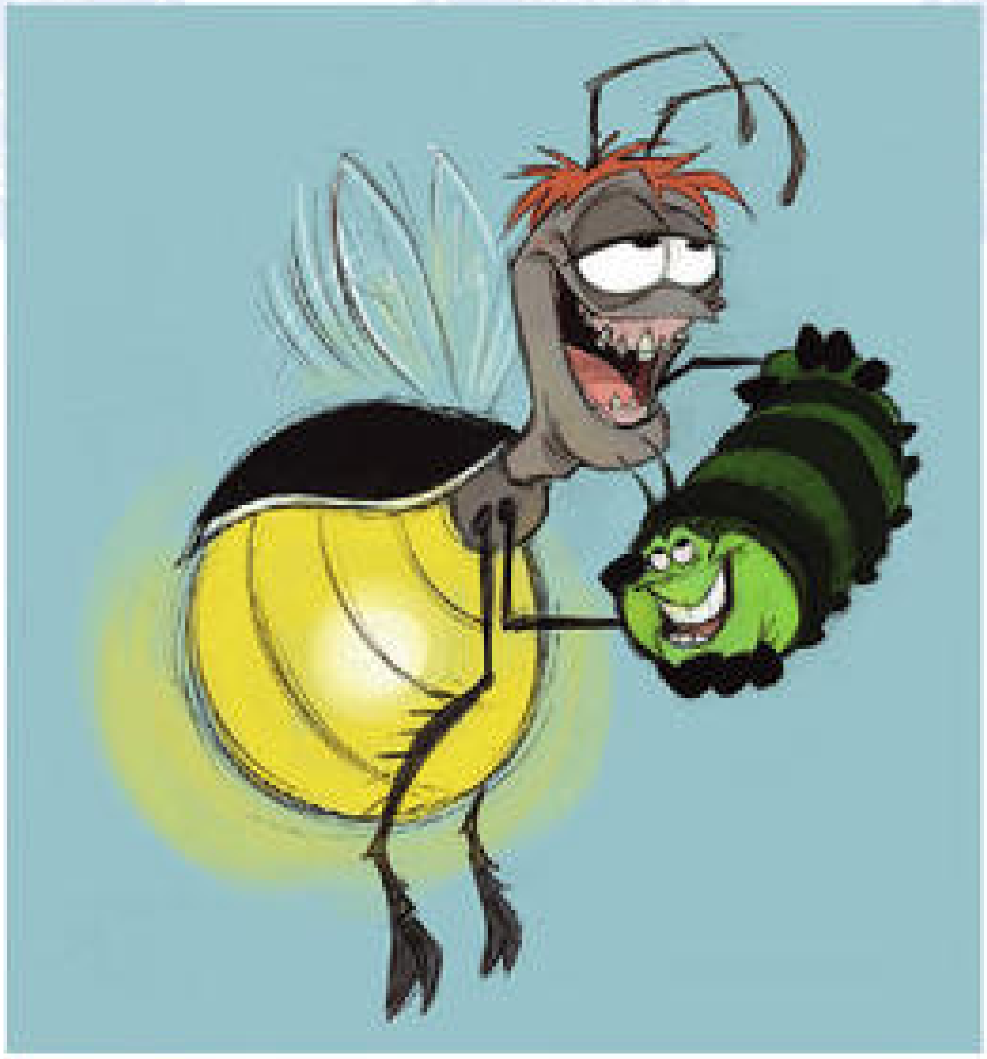
Mike Surrey | graphite

RAY

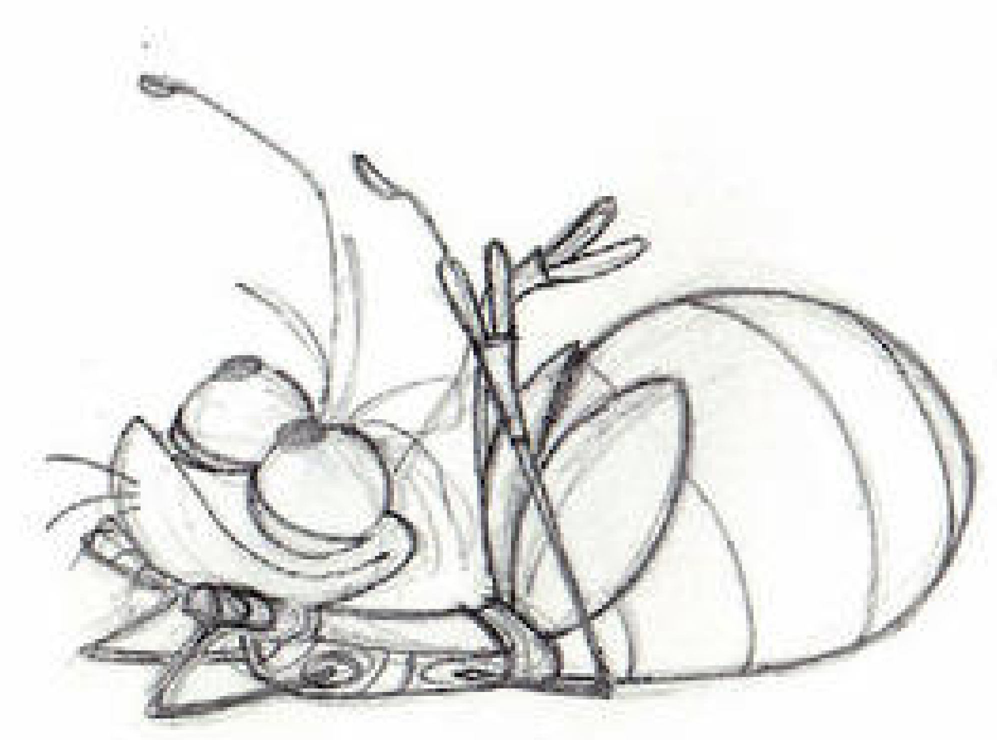
From the small to the minuscule: Ray, the firefly.

"They asked me to work on Ray," supervising animator Mike Surrey recalls. "I didn't even know who Ray was. Your ego says, 'Firefly? That's really small, so what is that?'—hoping he's not just this little spotlight flying around.

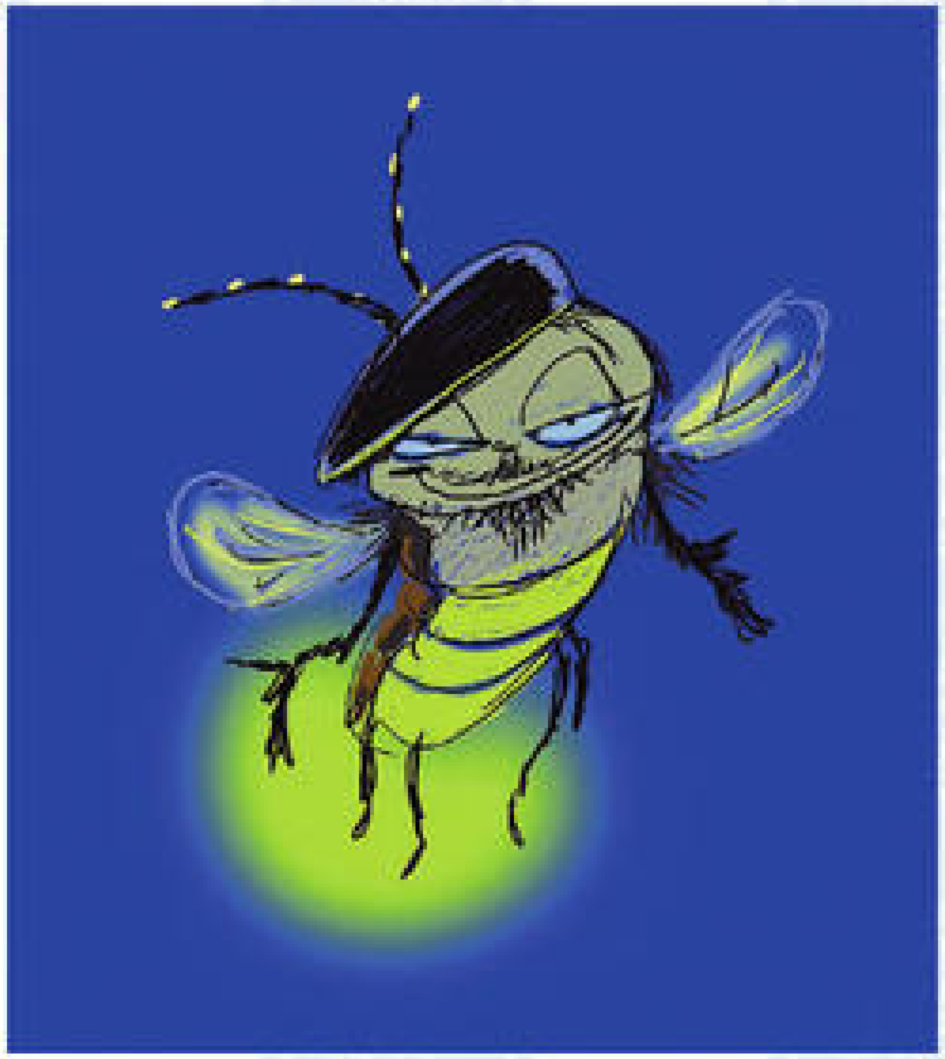
"But from the very first, he was memorable. He's the romantic. He is what Naveen and Tiana are, but he has no problem expressing his love, openly and with not a care—he knows the two of them are in the same boat he is, but they just can't. It's hard not to feel for a character like that. He brings a real embodiment of the idea of the transcendent power of love. All from this lumpy, gap-toothed, goofy-looking little guy."



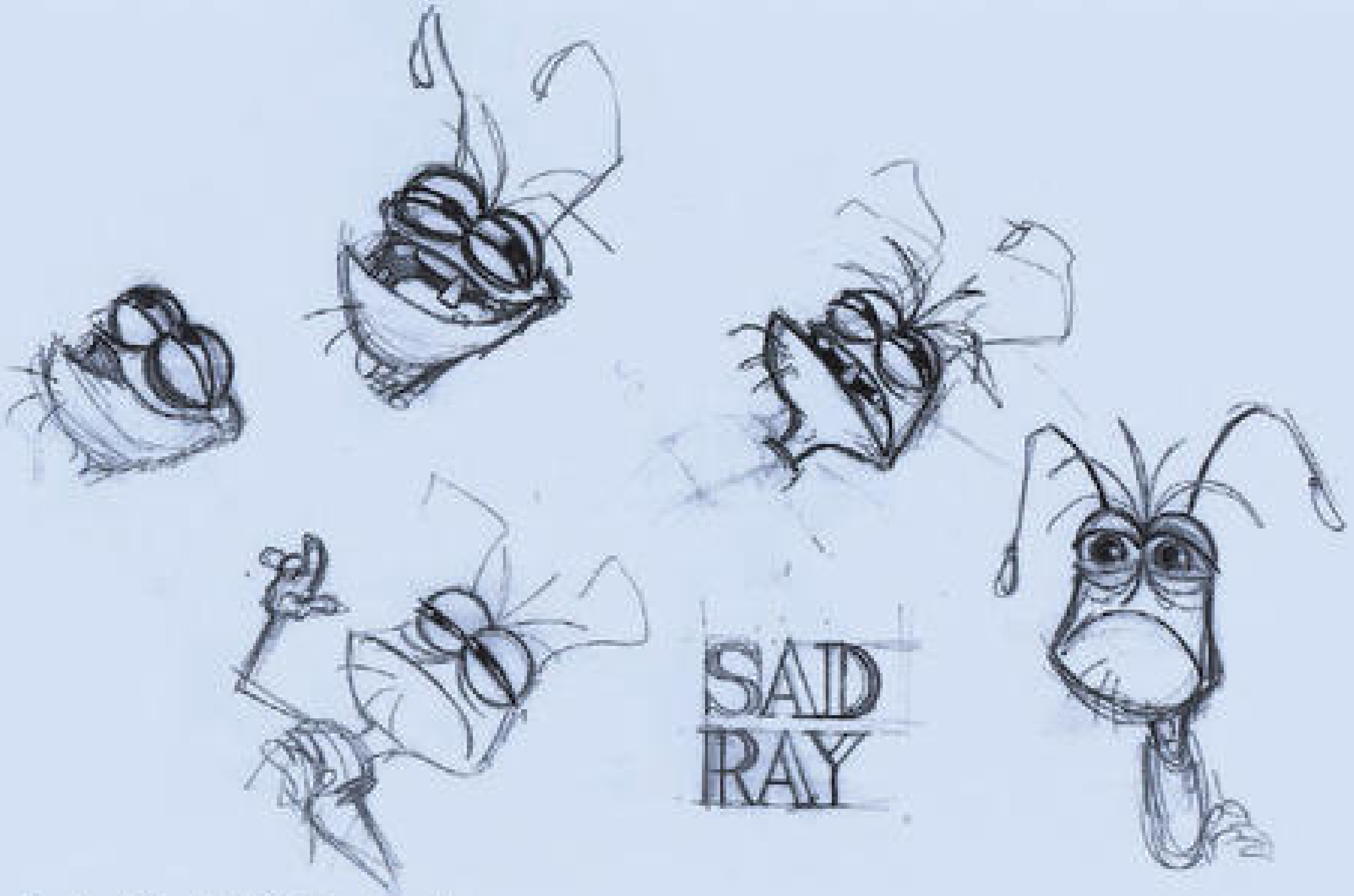
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



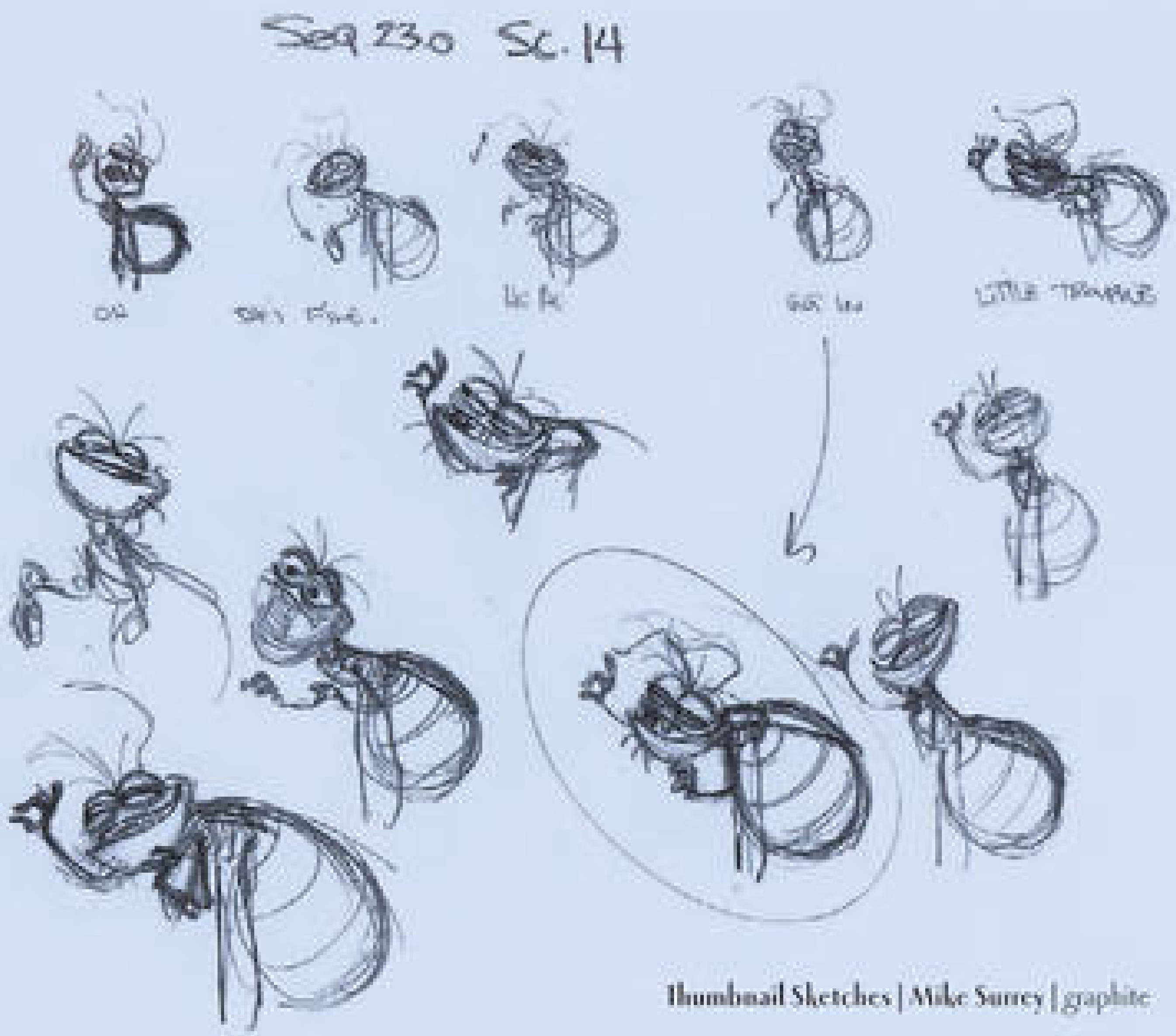
Mike Surrey | graphite



John Musker | digital



Thumbnail Sketches | **Mike Surrey** | graphite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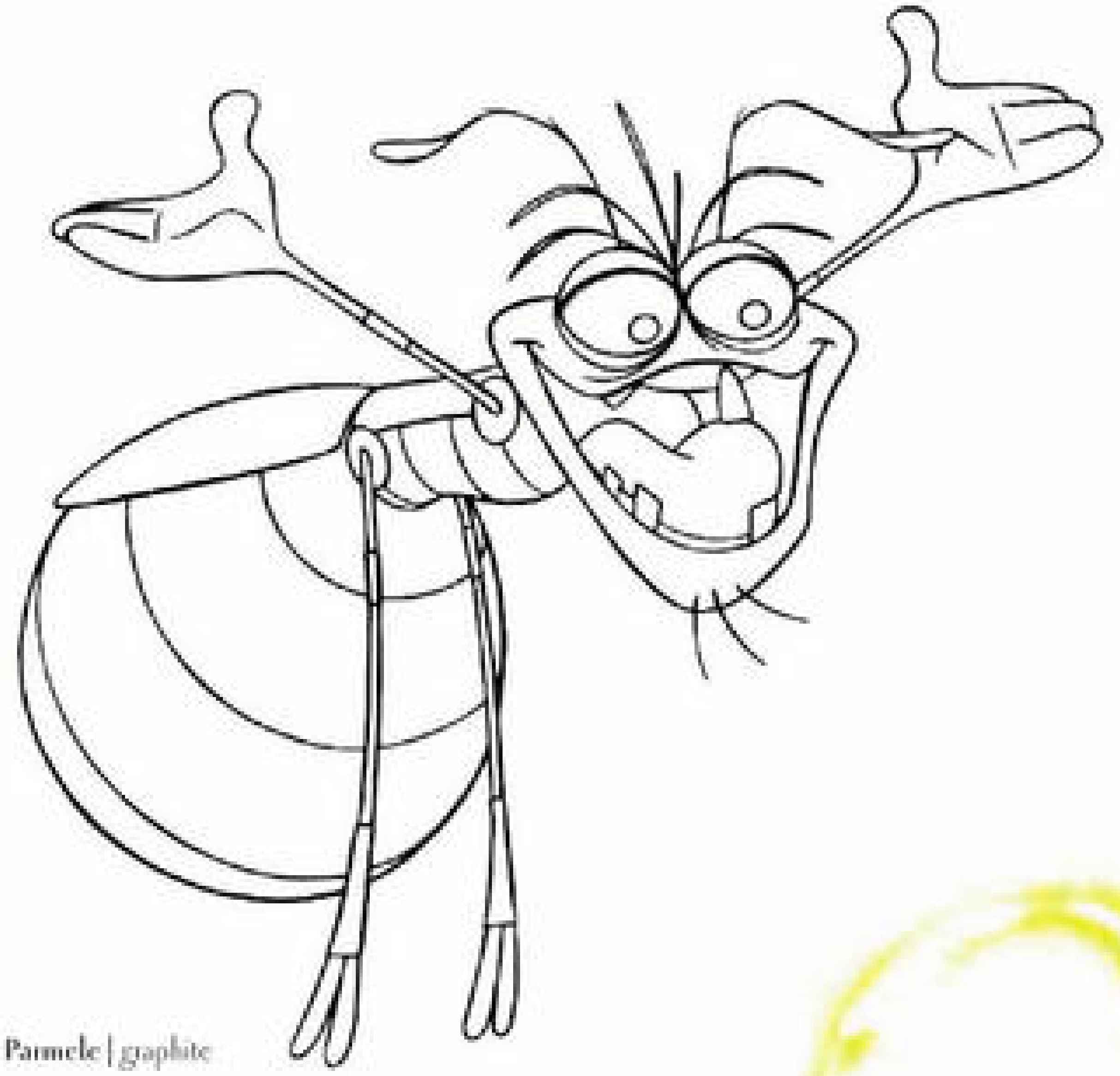
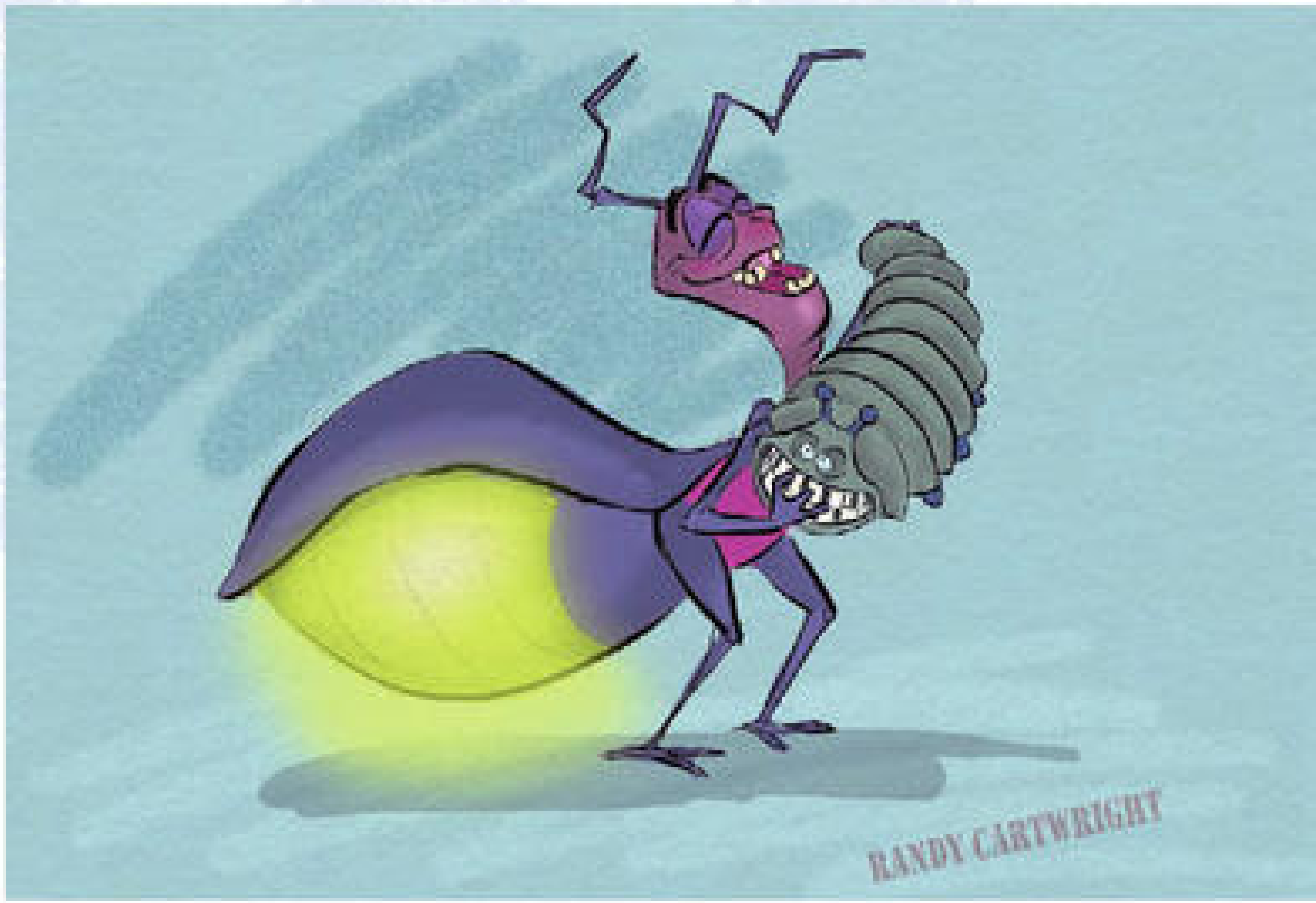
OK
SHE'S FINE.

Thumbnail Sketches | **Mike Surrey** | graphite



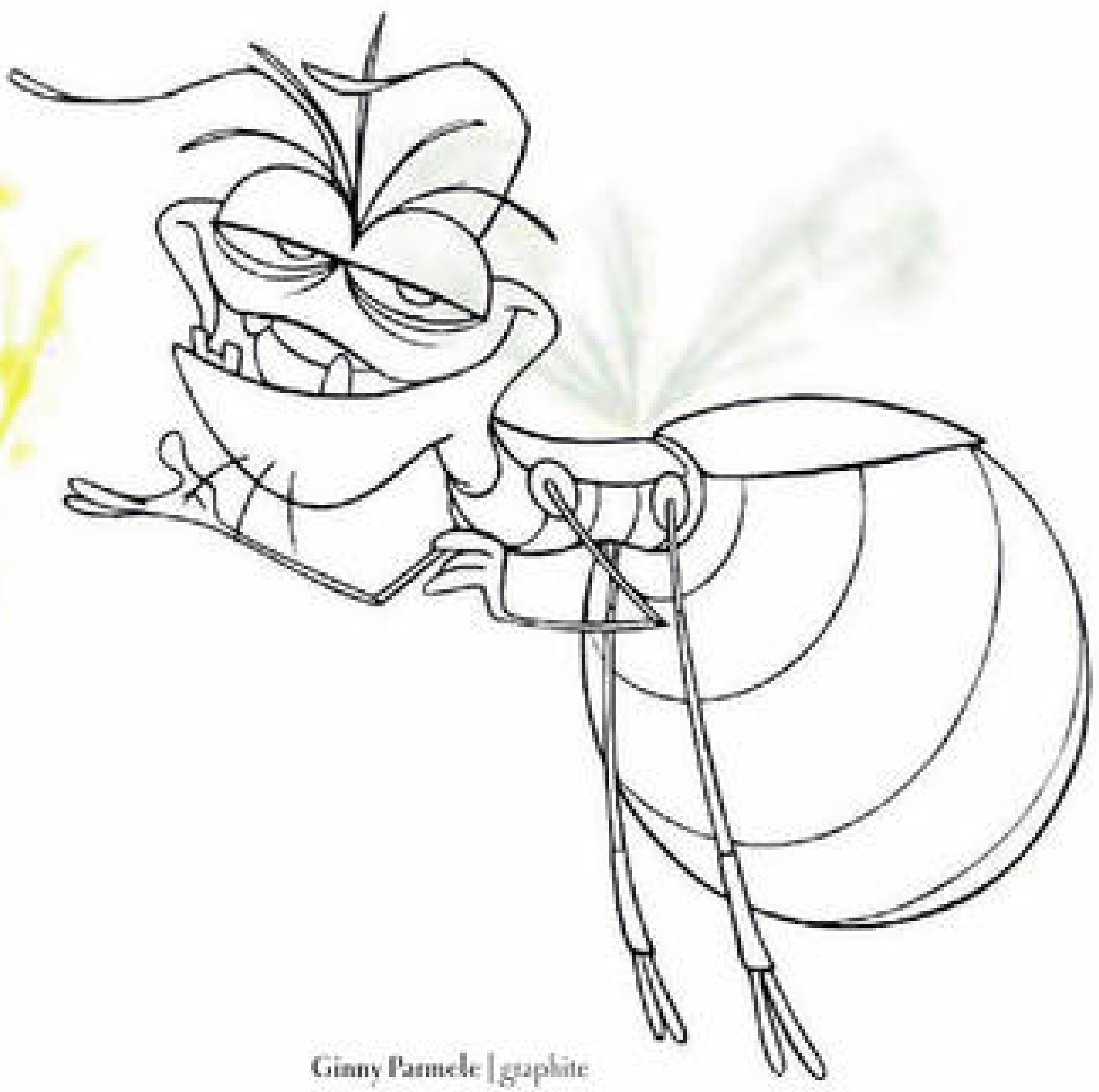
Ginny Parmele | graphite



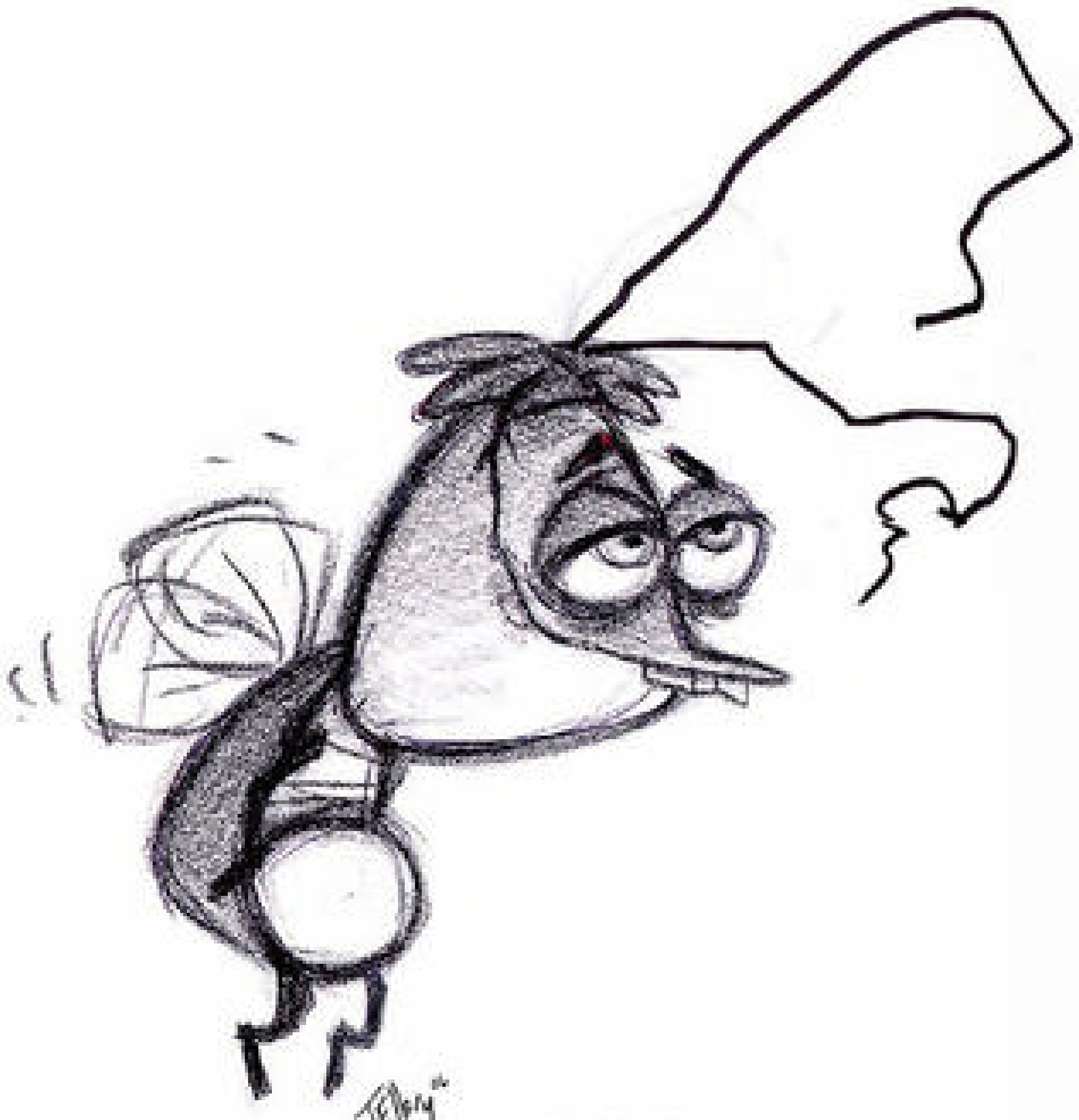
Randy Cartwright | digital

Ray

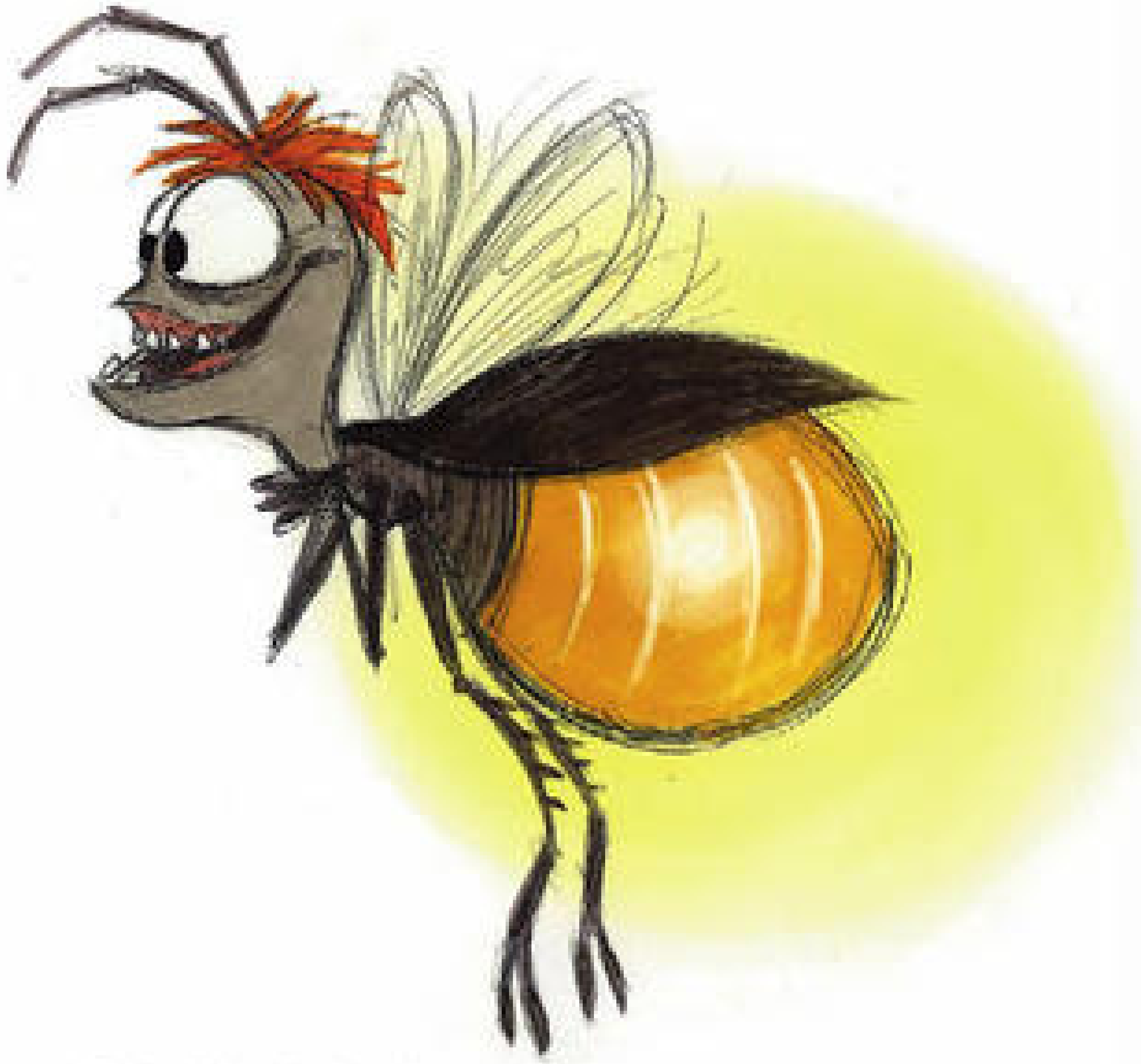
"I'd say Ray is a good example of a character that felt very animatable right from the beginning. The biggest thing I dealt with was his snaggletooth look, and making that appealing. But I'd say that's a situation where the shapes and his basic look hit early."
—Bill Schwab, character designer



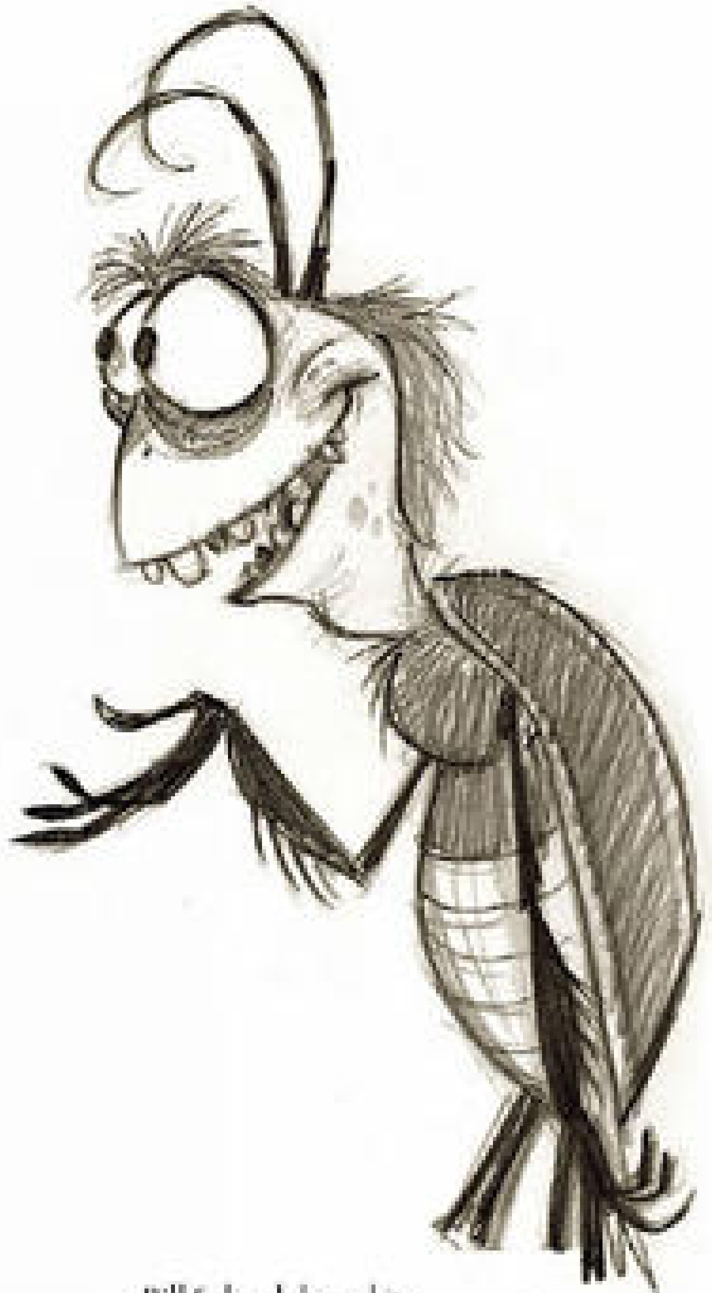
Ginny Parmele | graphite



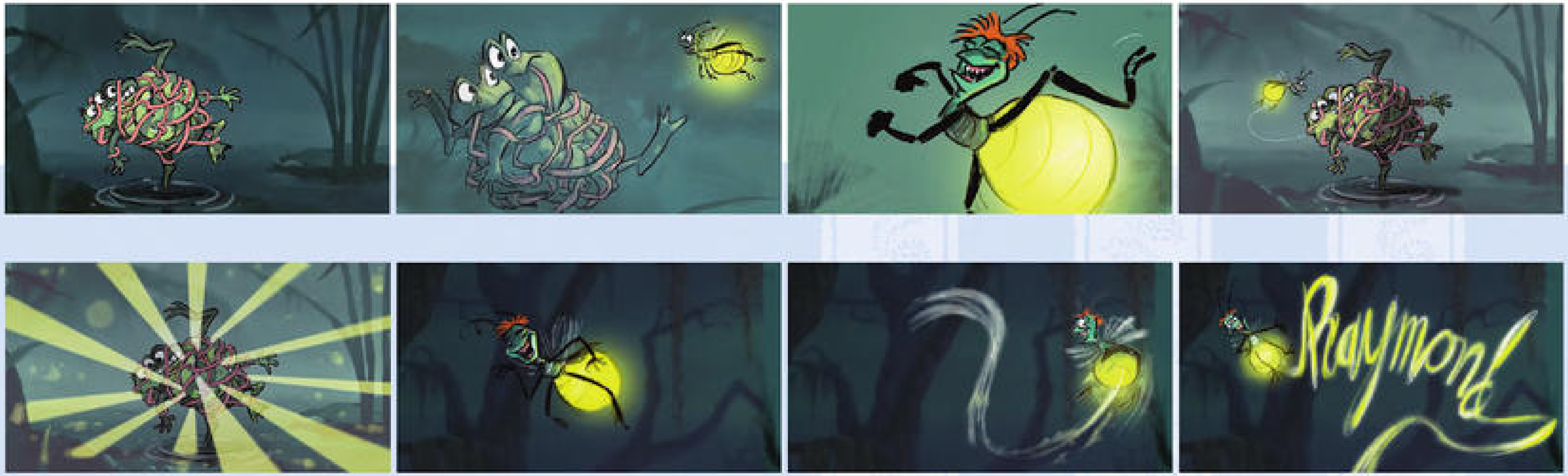
Tom Ellery | graphite



Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

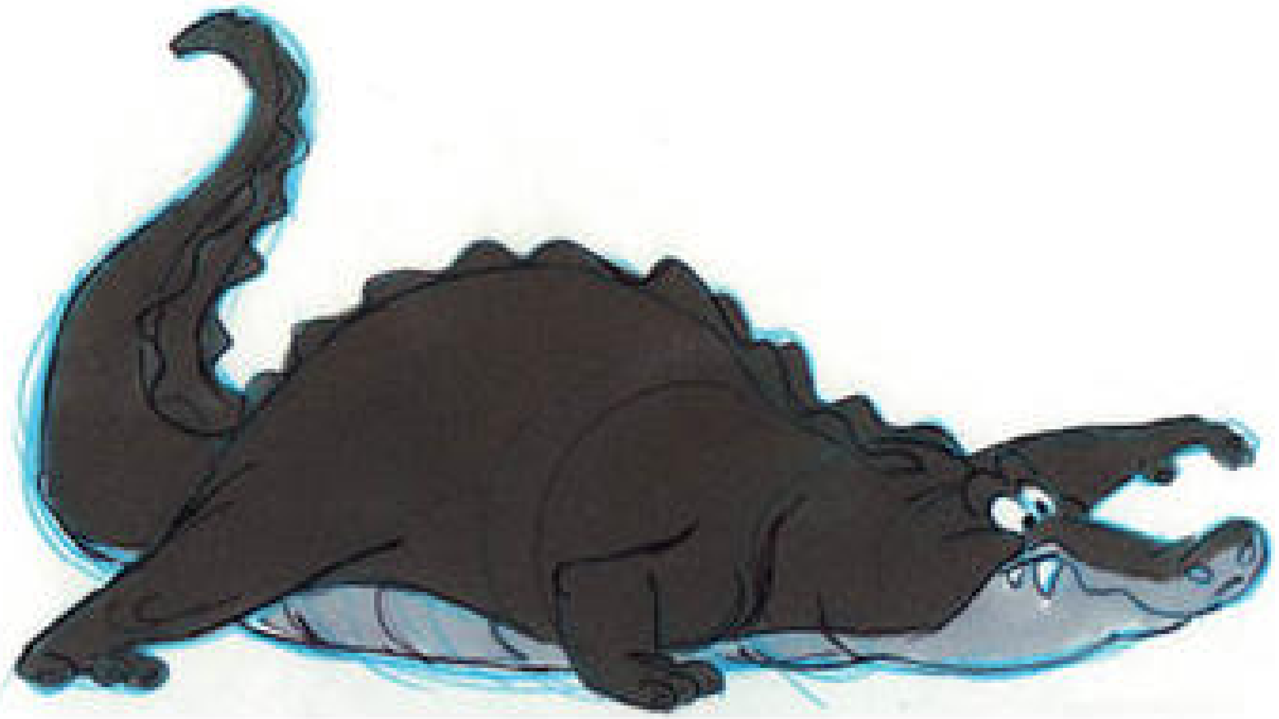


Bill Schwab | graphite

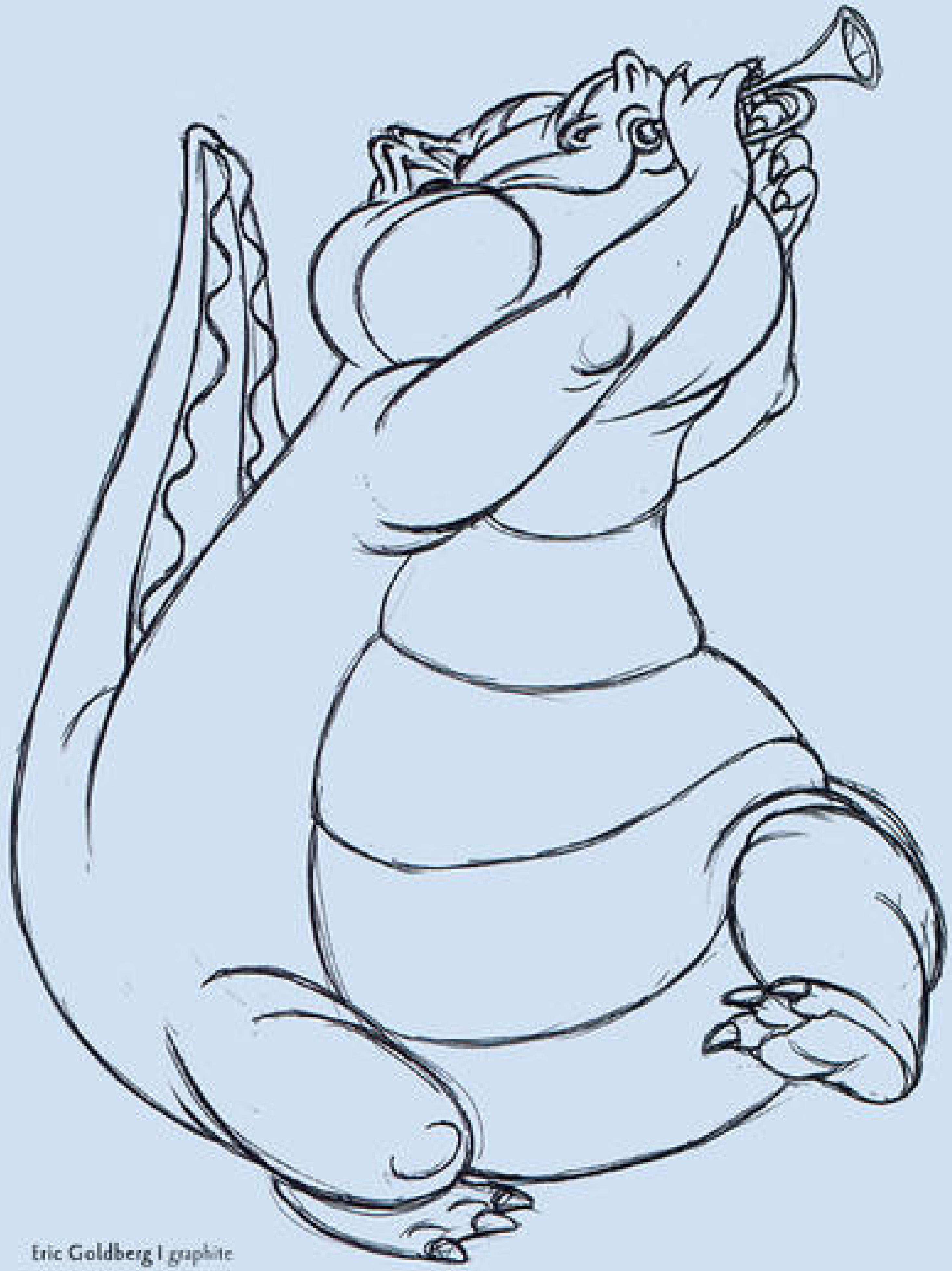


Storyboards | Wilbert Plijnaar | digital

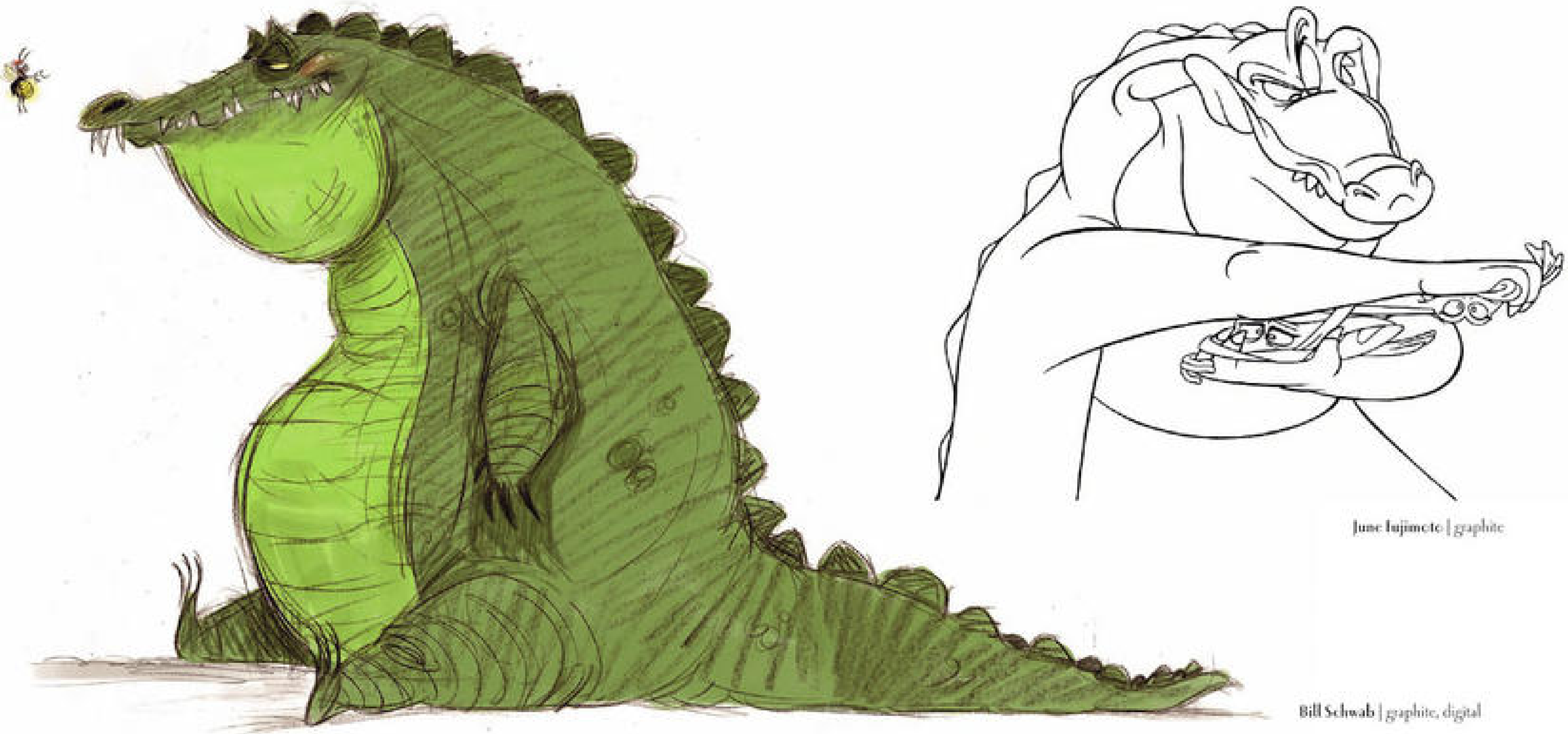
Louis



Andreas Deja | graphite, digital

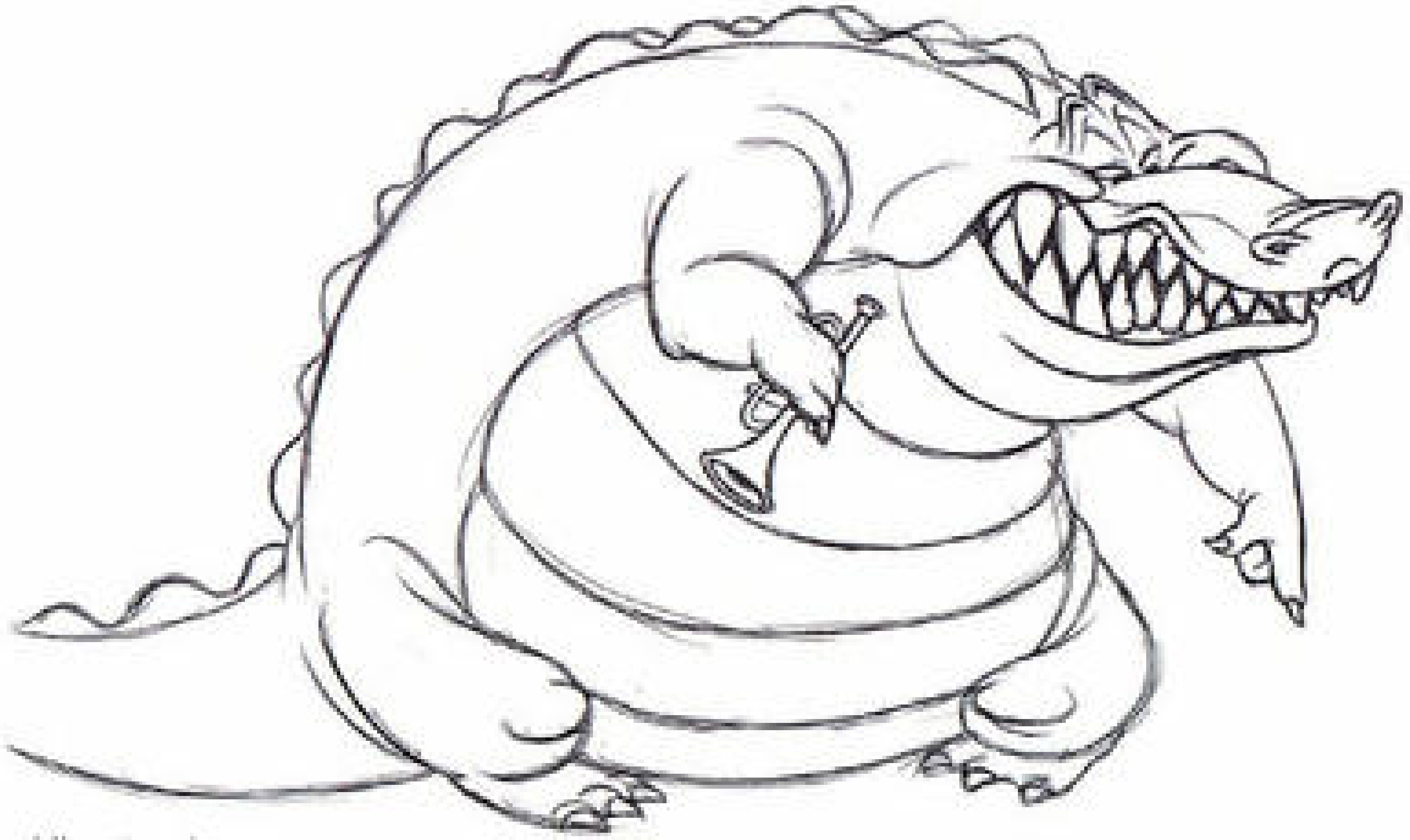


Eric Goldberg | graphite

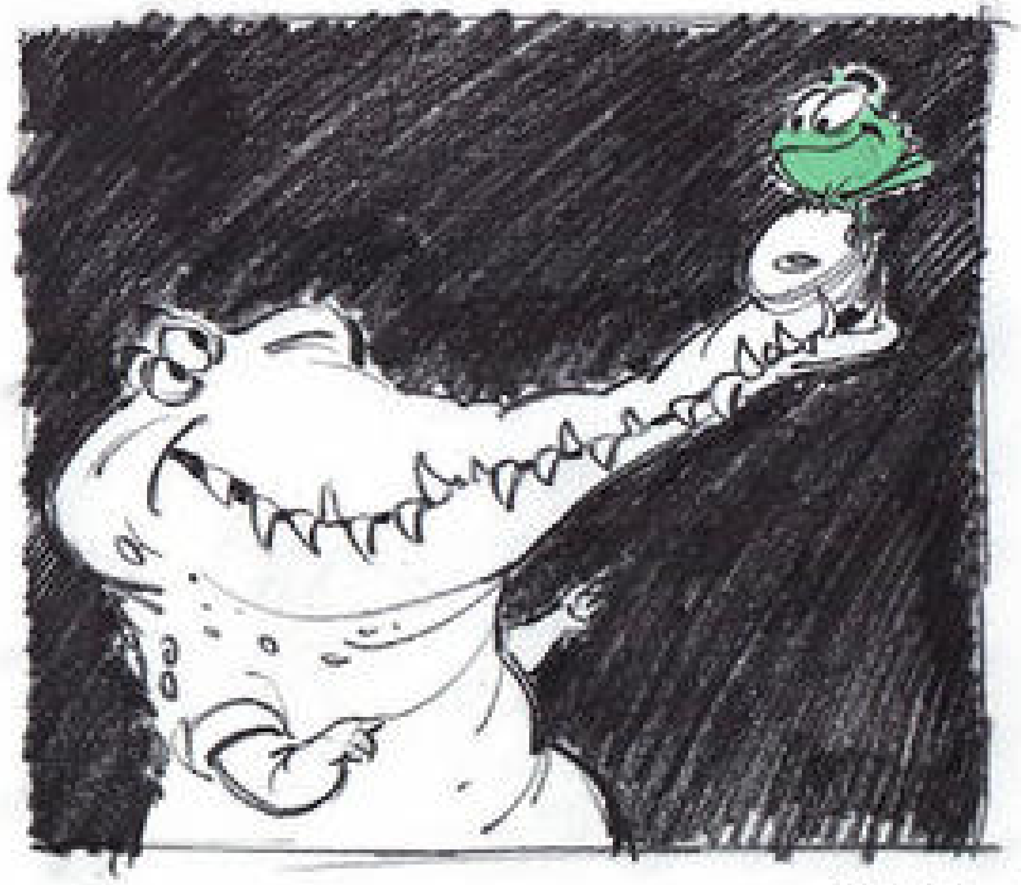


June Fujimoto | graphite

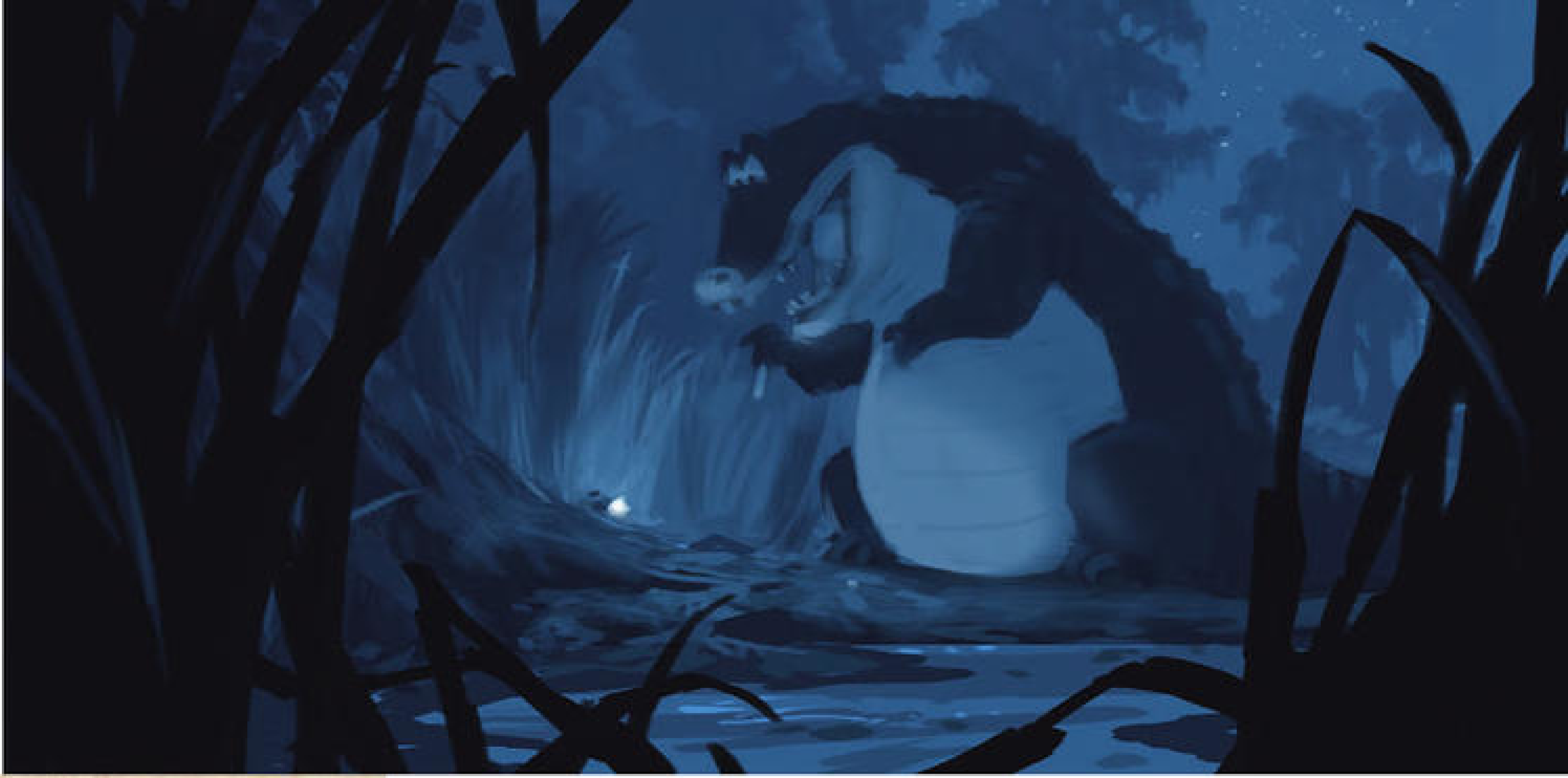
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



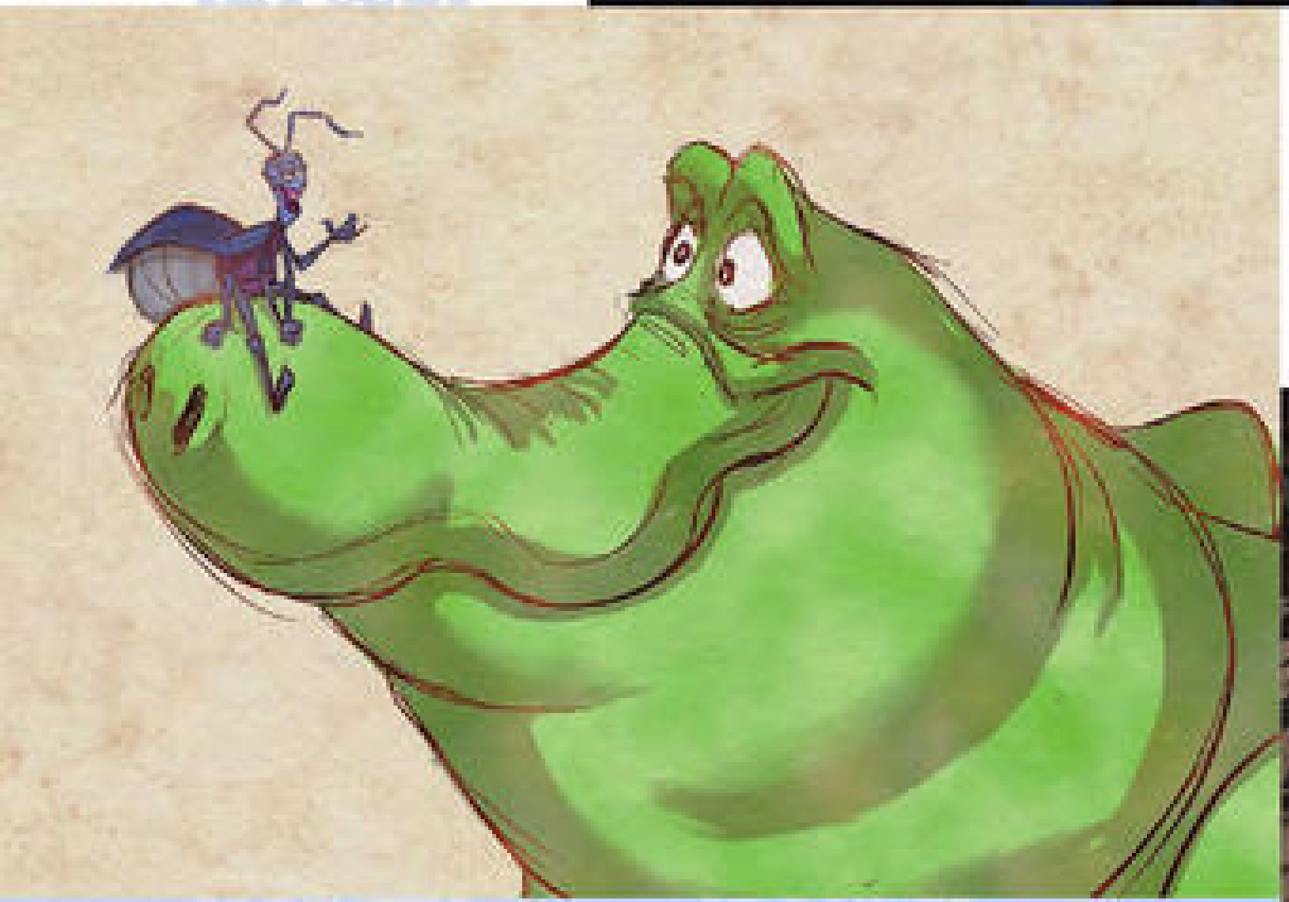
Eric Goldberg | graphite



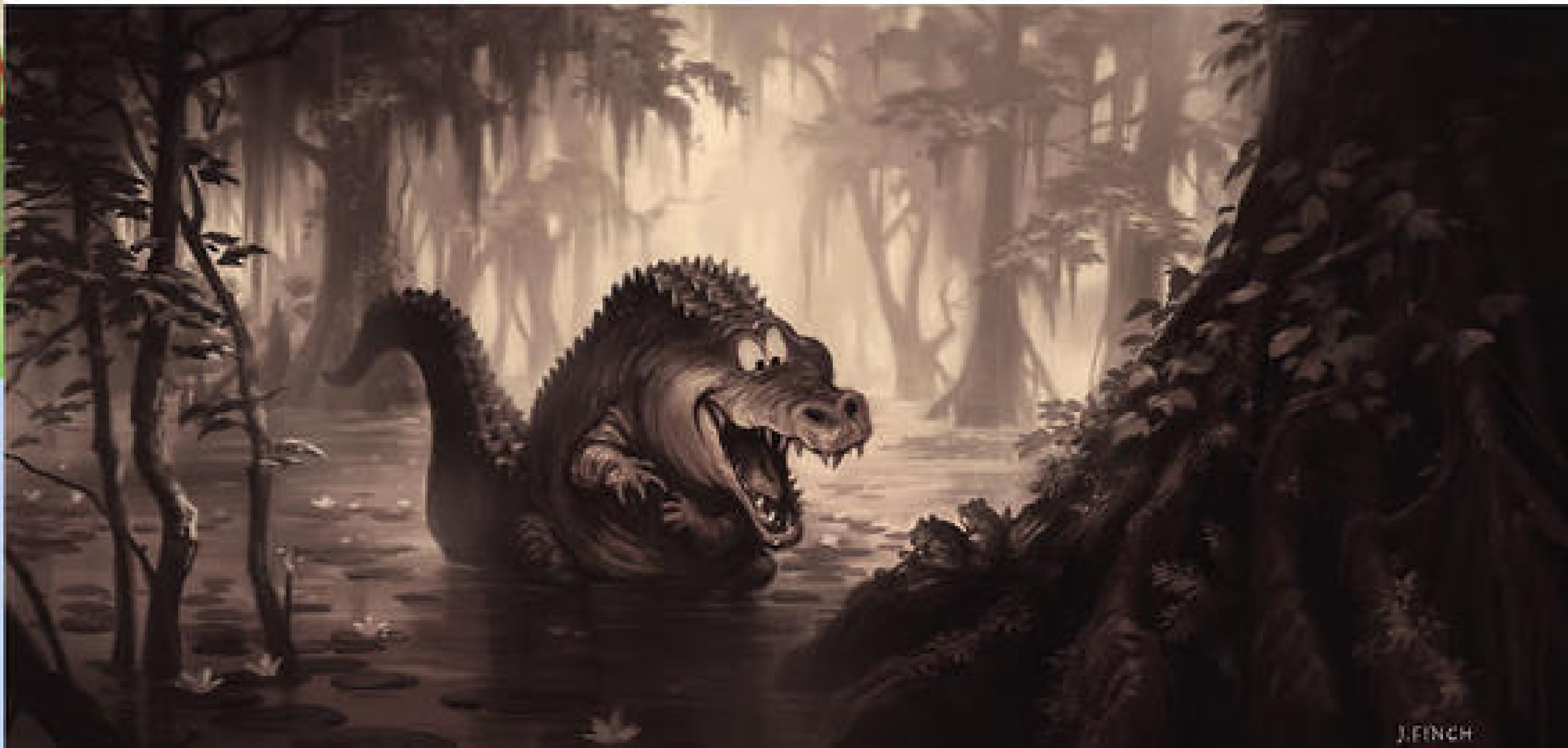
Rik Maki | graphite



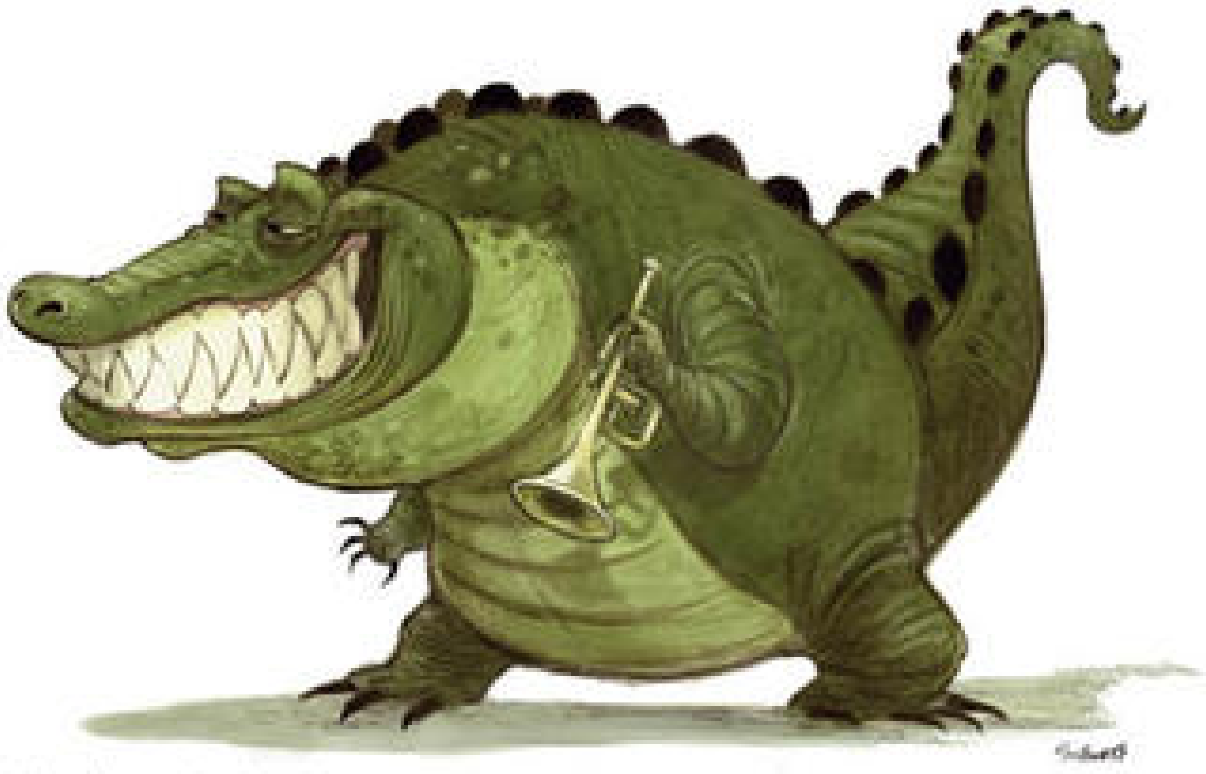
James Aaron Finch | digital



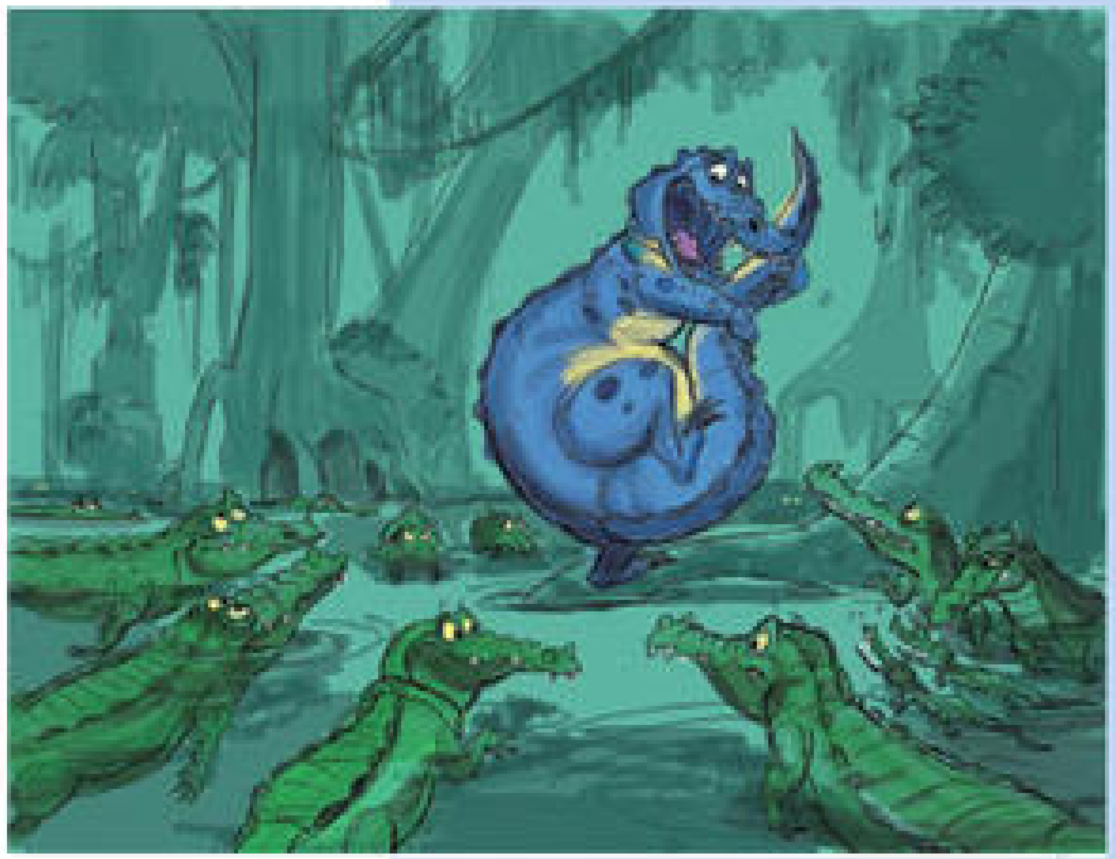
Randy Cartwright | digital



James Aaron Finch | digital



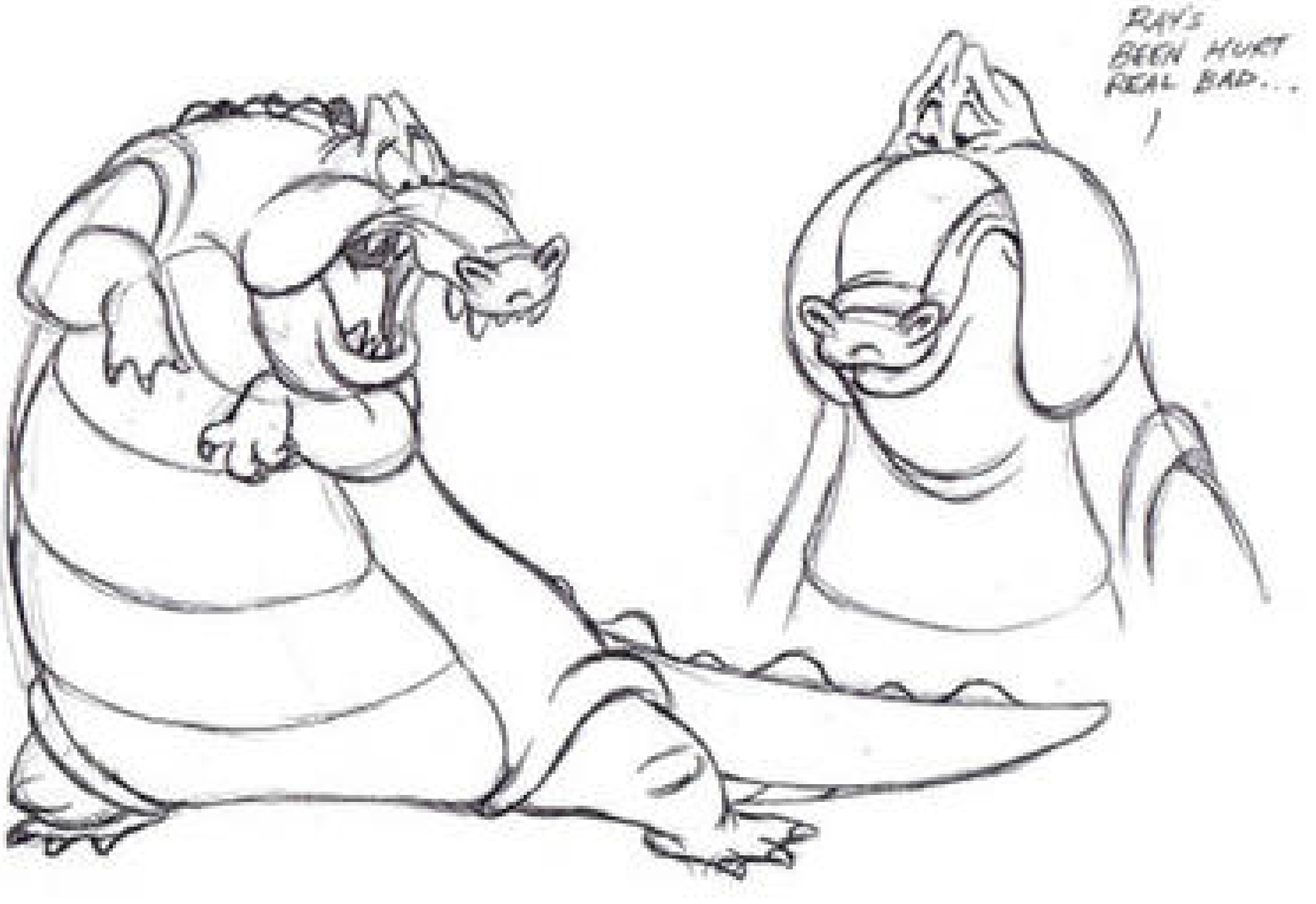
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



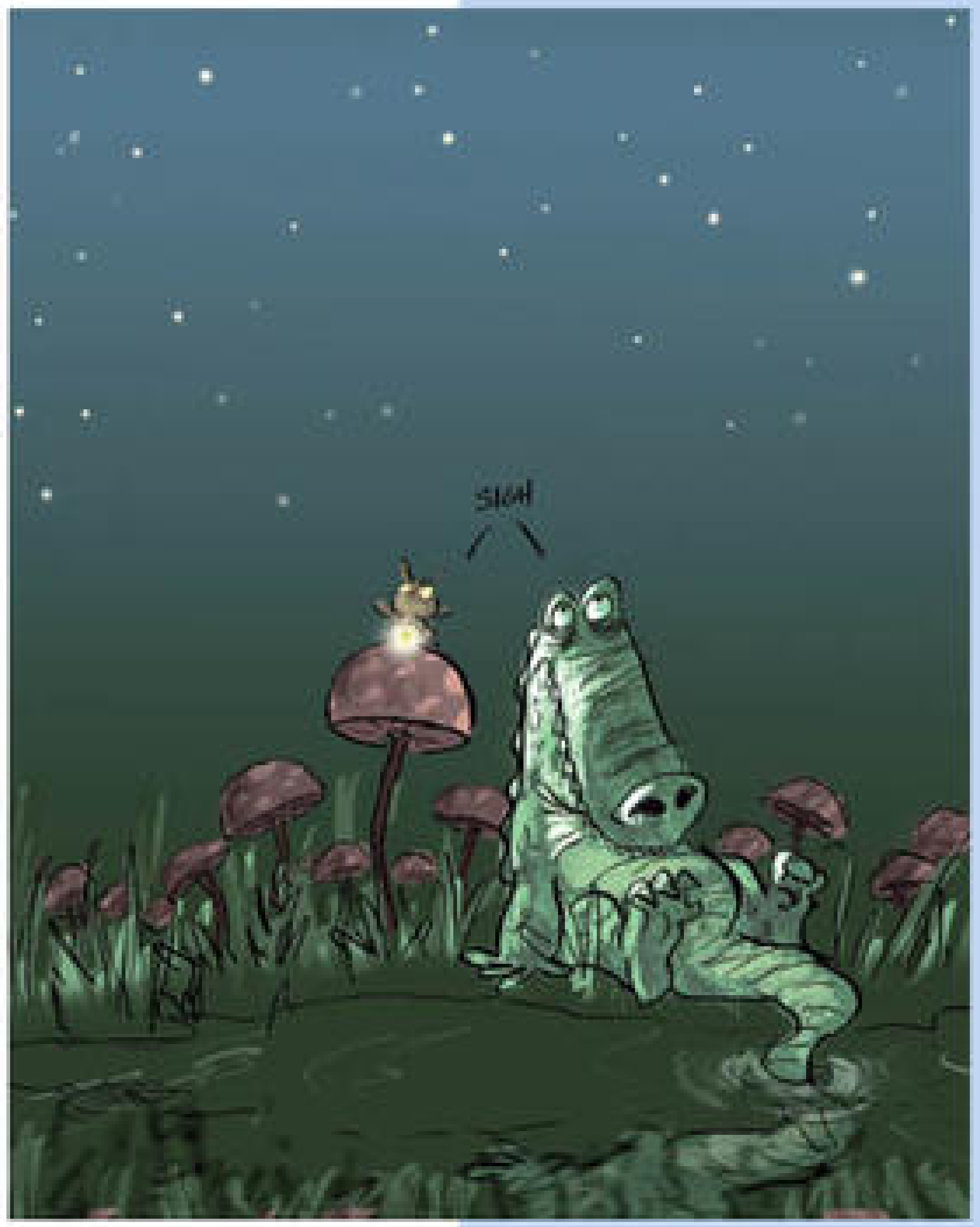
Bruce Morris | digital

"Louis is study in contrast; he 's a bundle and a big sissy, played for laughs inside this huge alligator's body. But he has this one gift - he's a jazz trumper virtuoso, and when he gets to blow his gorn, of the small stuff melts away, and that's when he realy is who he is."

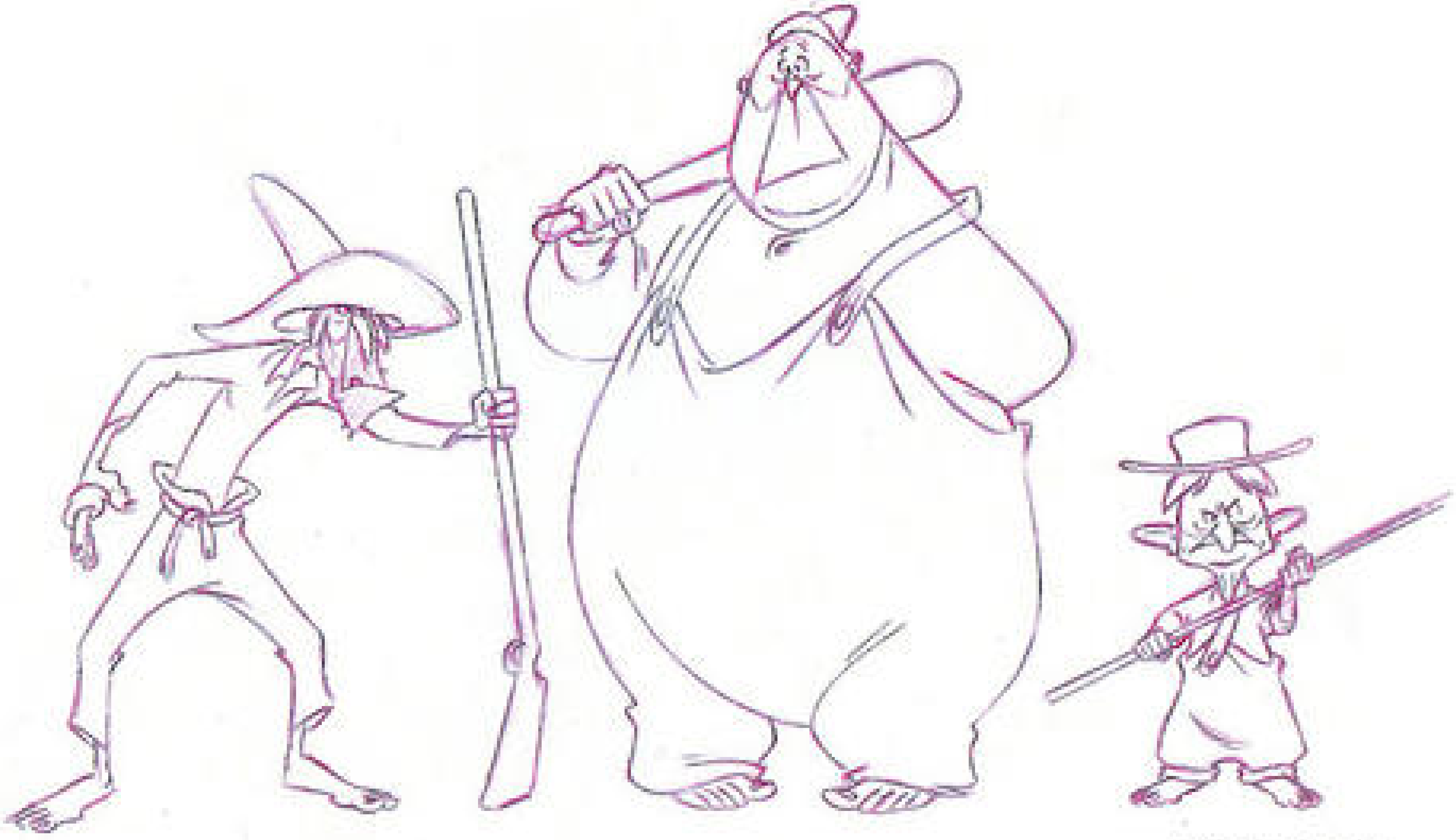
- Eric Goldberg, supervising animator


RAY'S BEEN HURT REAL BAD...

Eric Goldberg | graphite

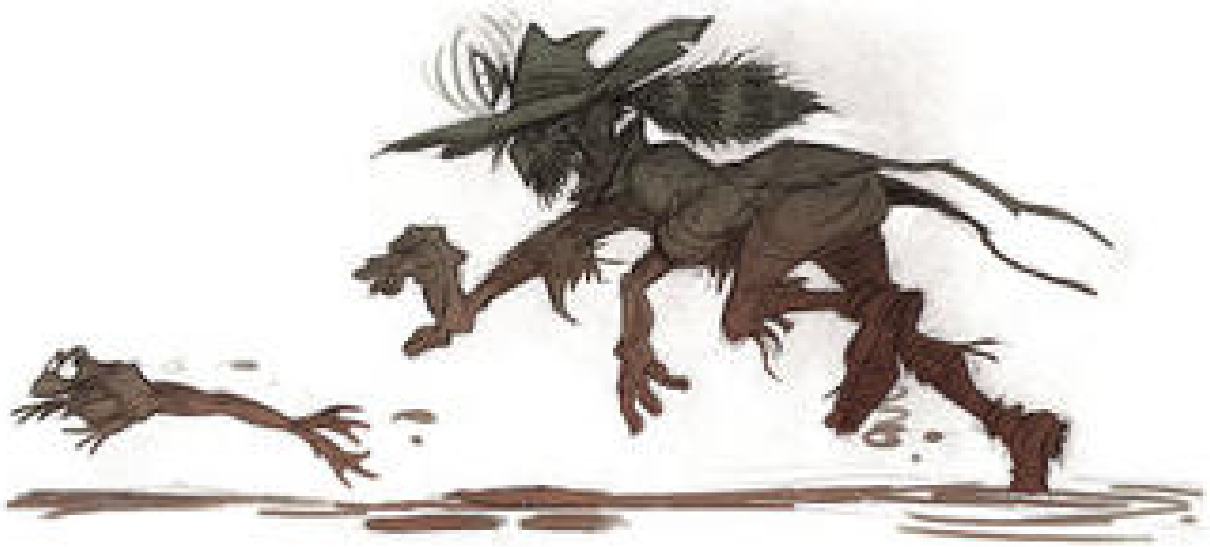


Daniel Chong | digital



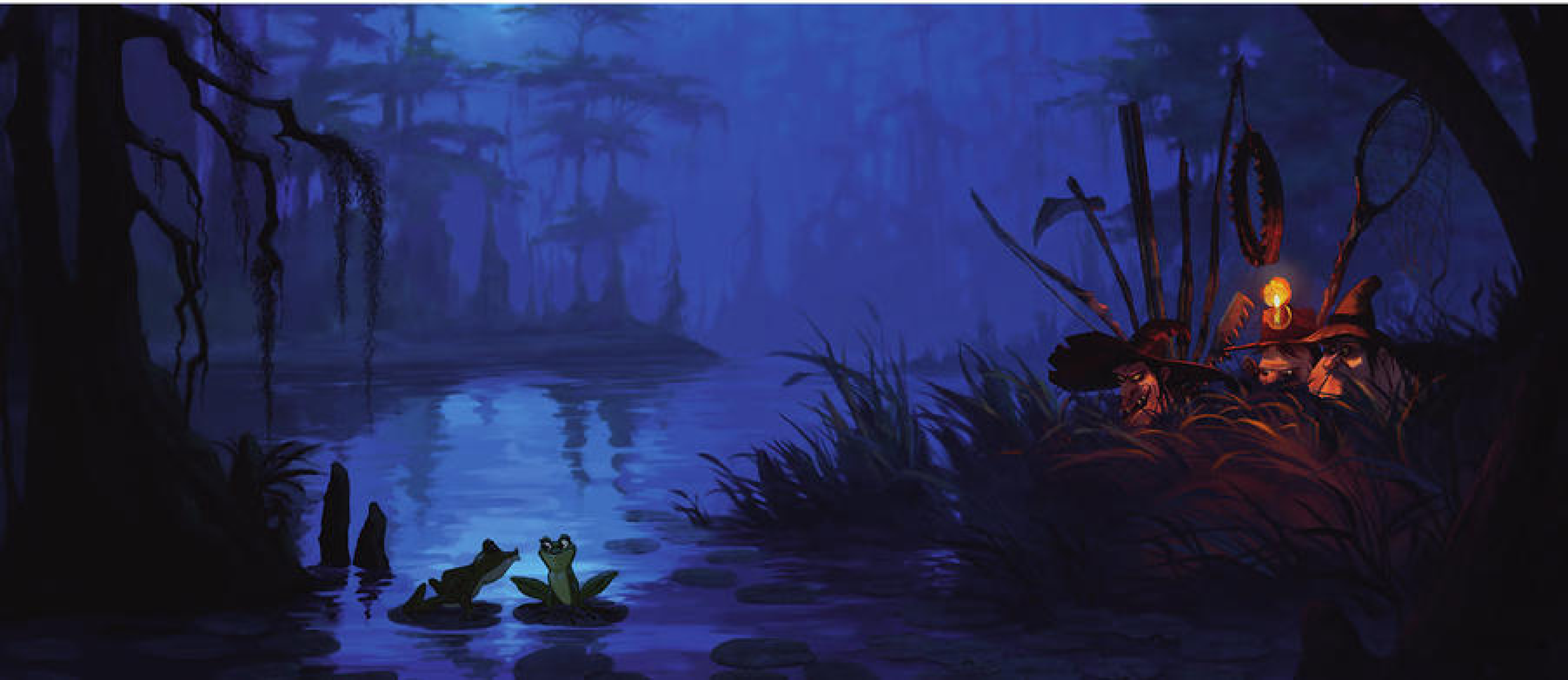
Dale Baer | graphite

"These characters are a rarity in Disney animated films. But I looked to the late, great Ward Kimball, who's animation style really inspired me to add a lot more humor by approaching it in more of a slapstick way, playing up the physical comedy, action, and memorable gags."
—DALE BAER, supervising animator

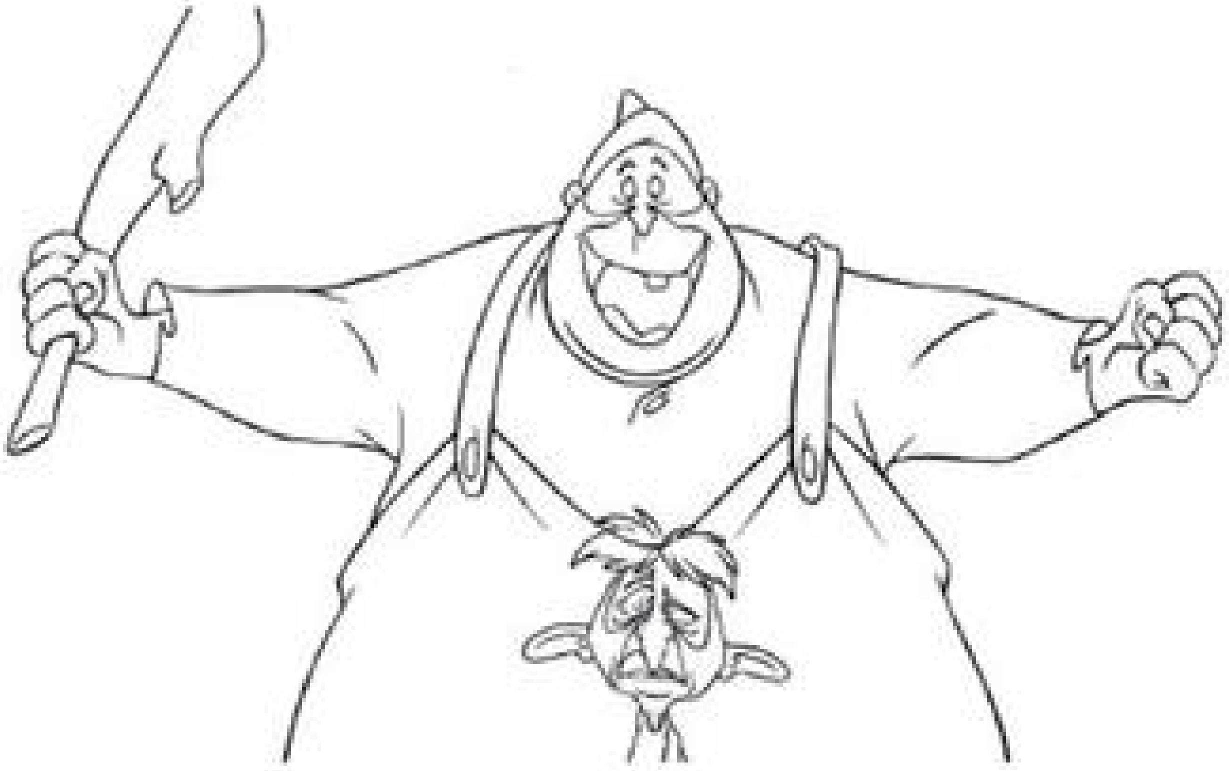


Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

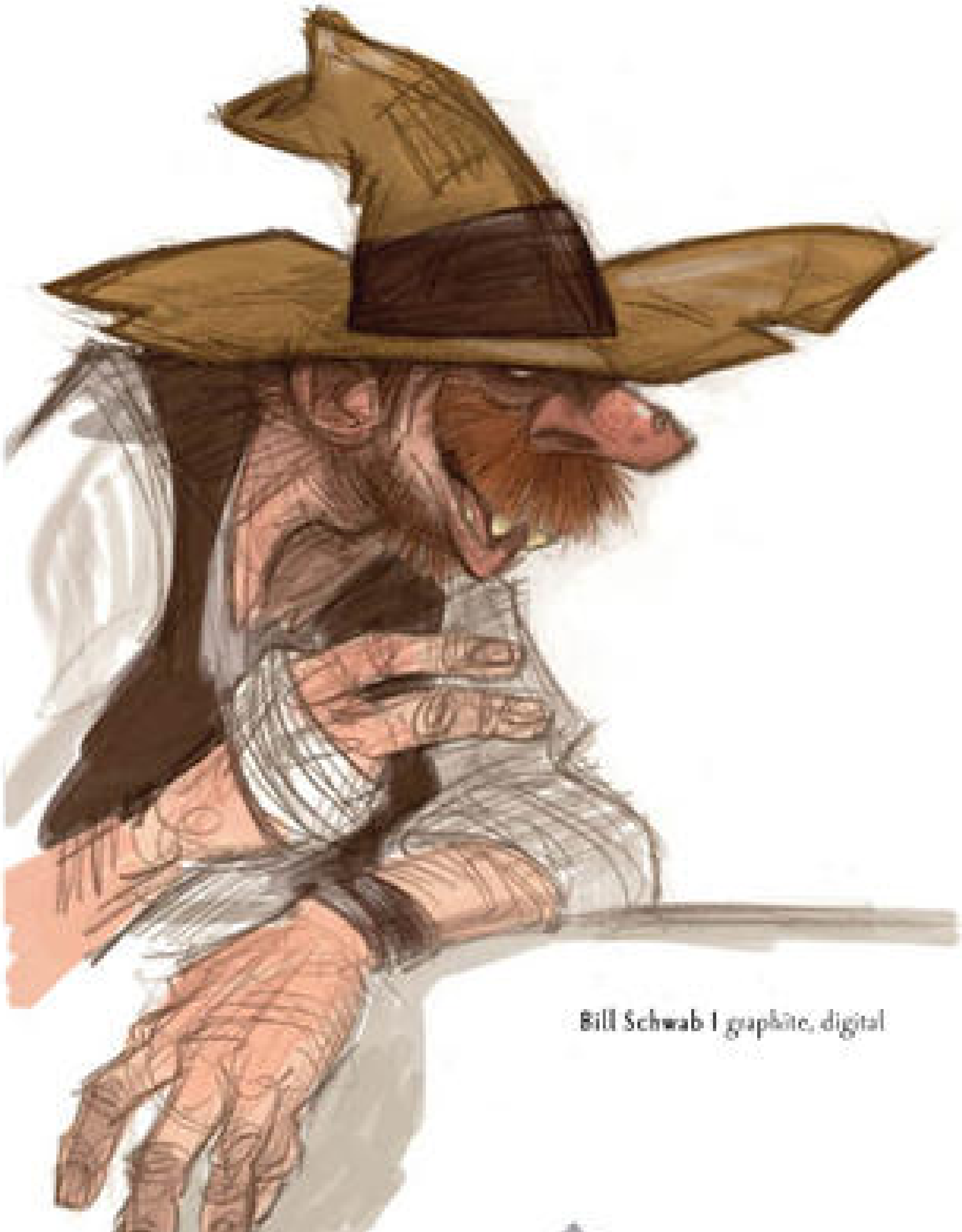
Lisa Keene | digital



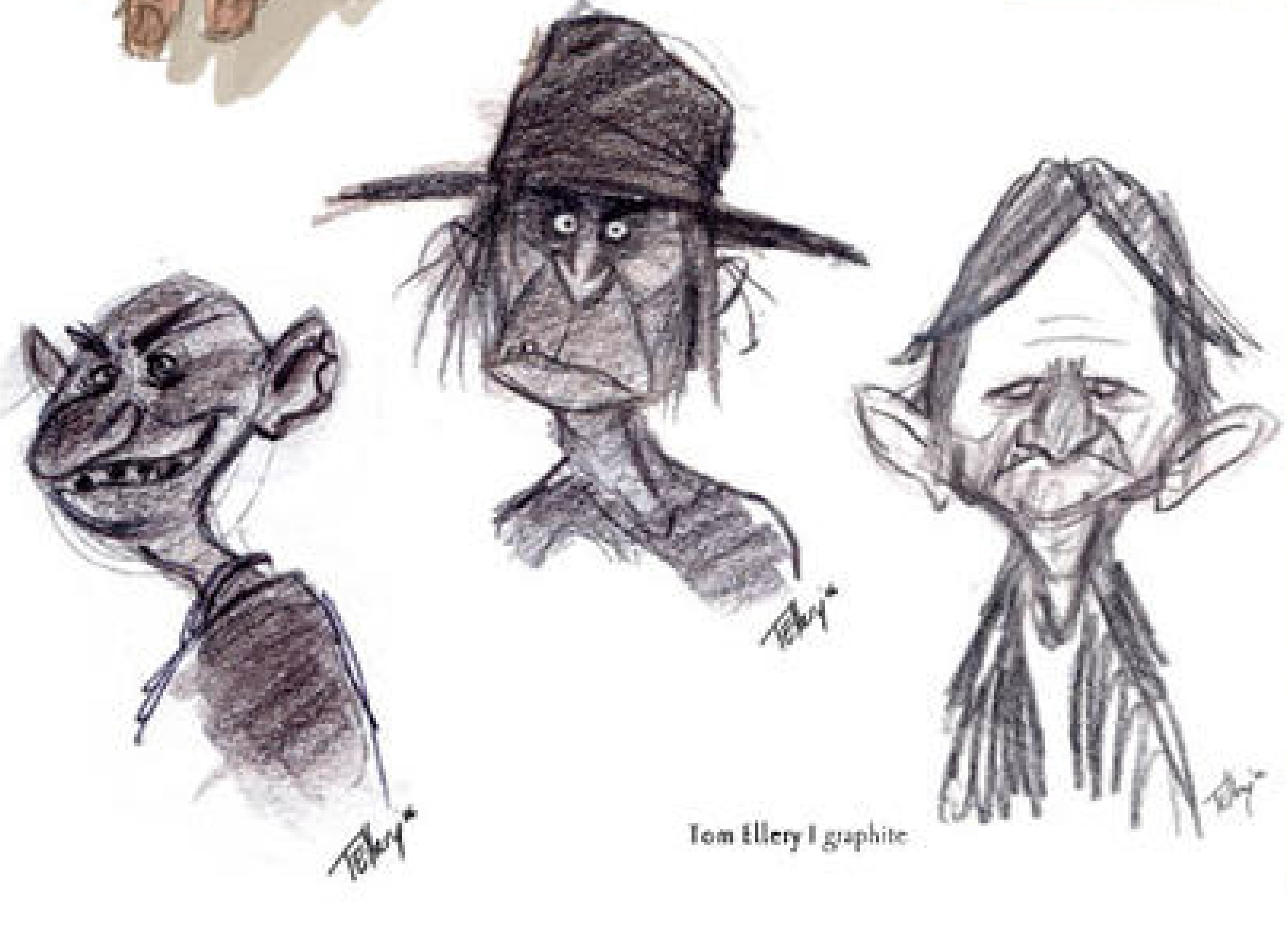
FROG HUNTERS



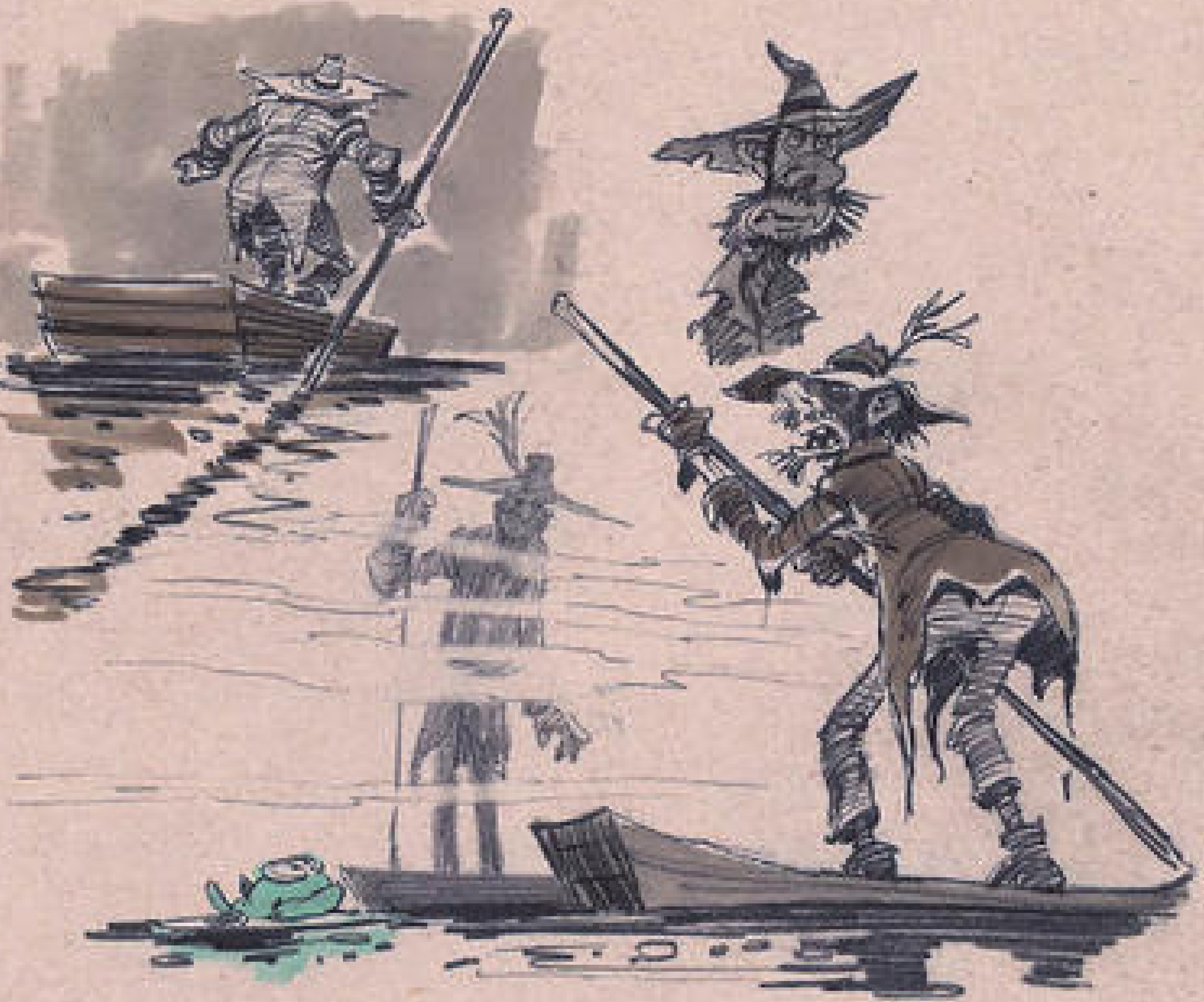
Dale Baer | graphite

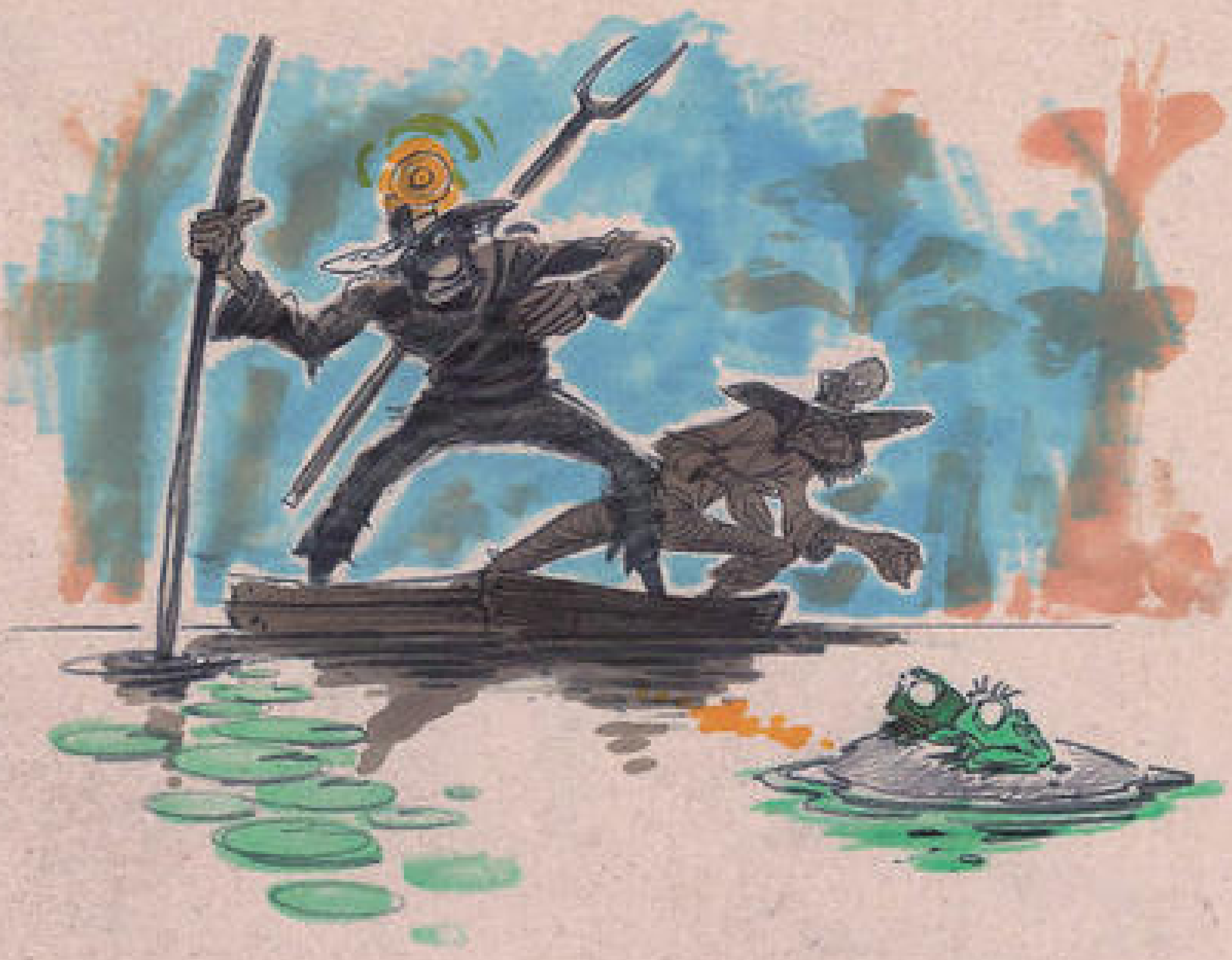


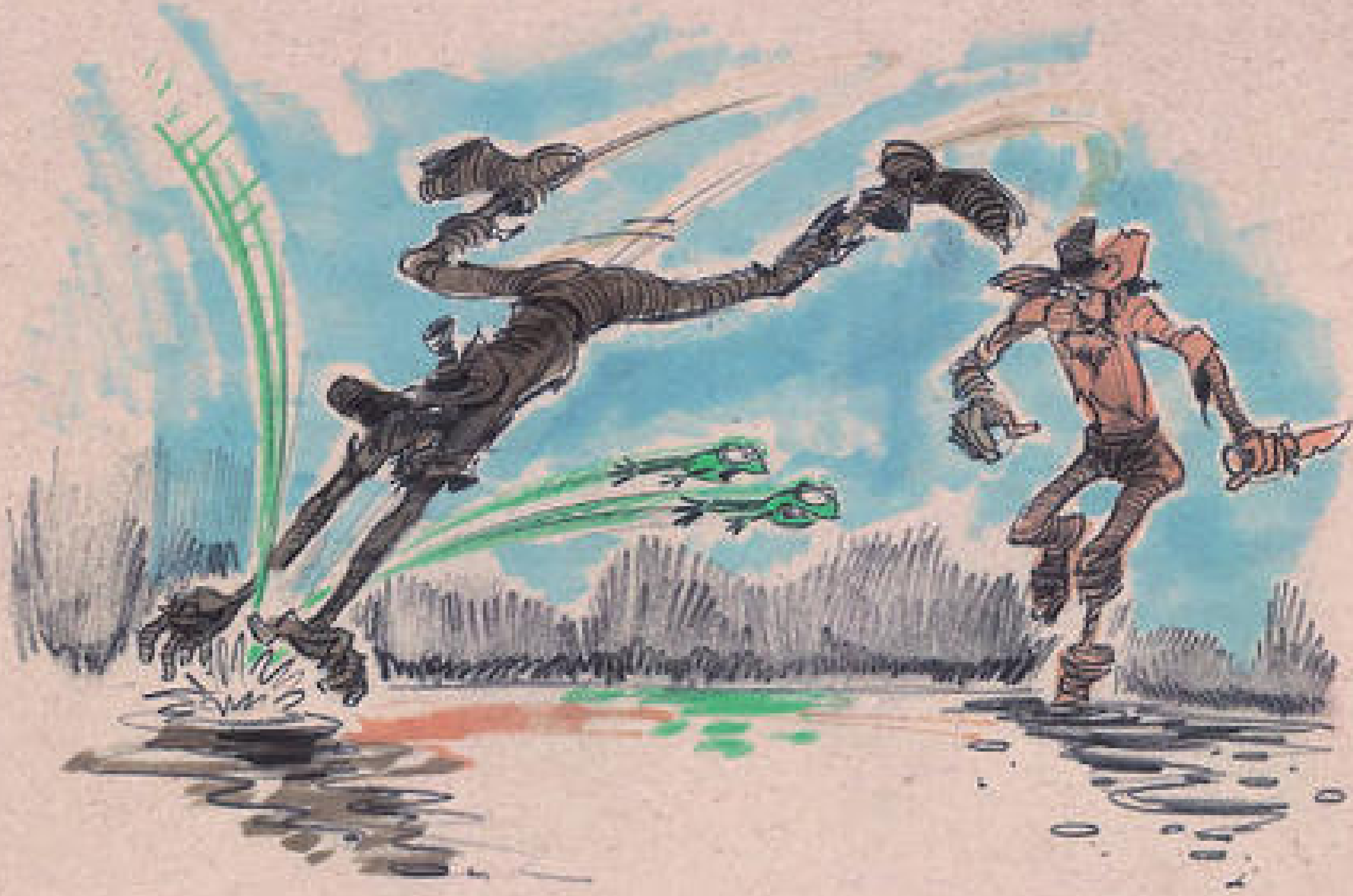
Bill Schwab | graphite, digital

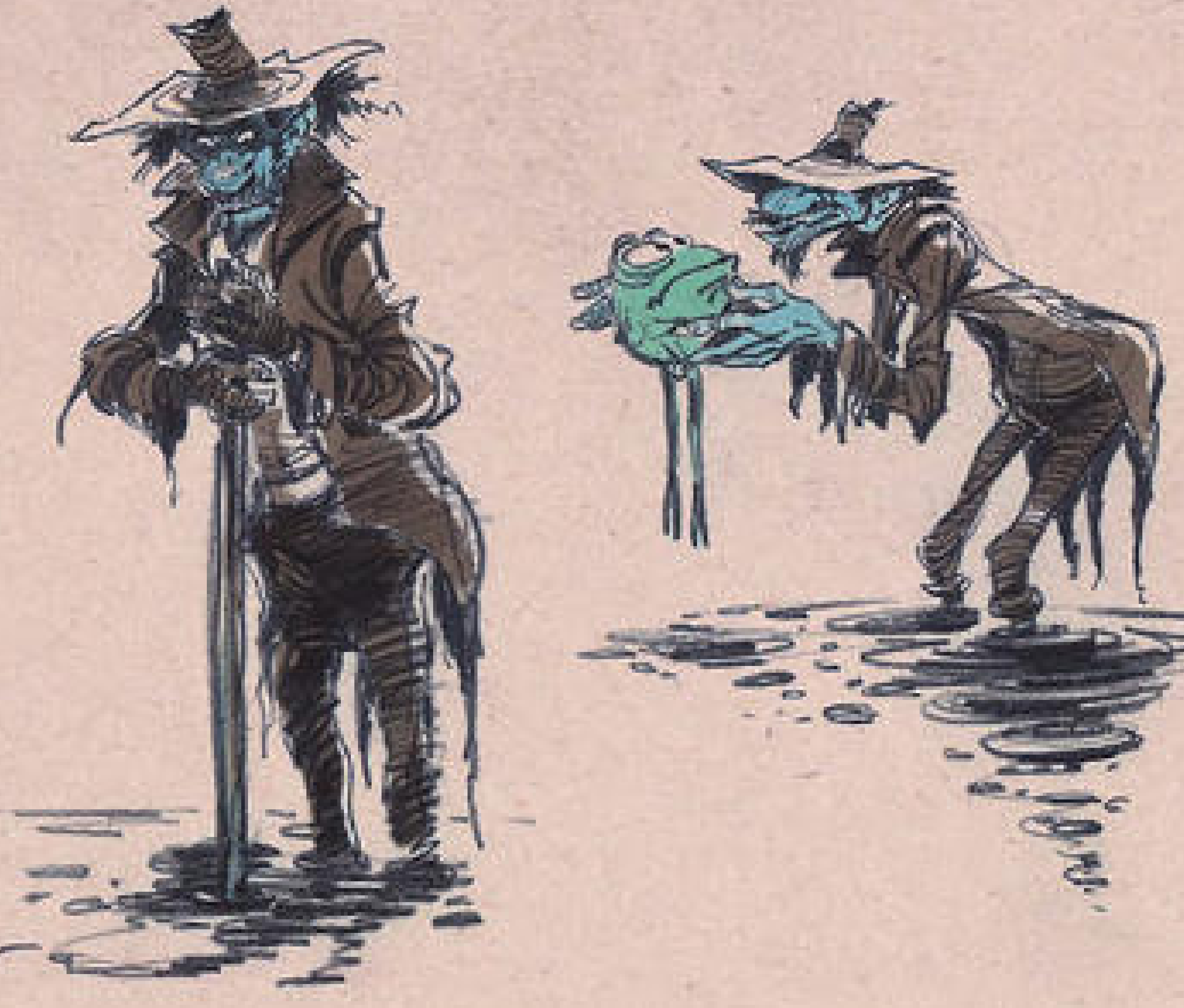


Tom Ellery | graphite

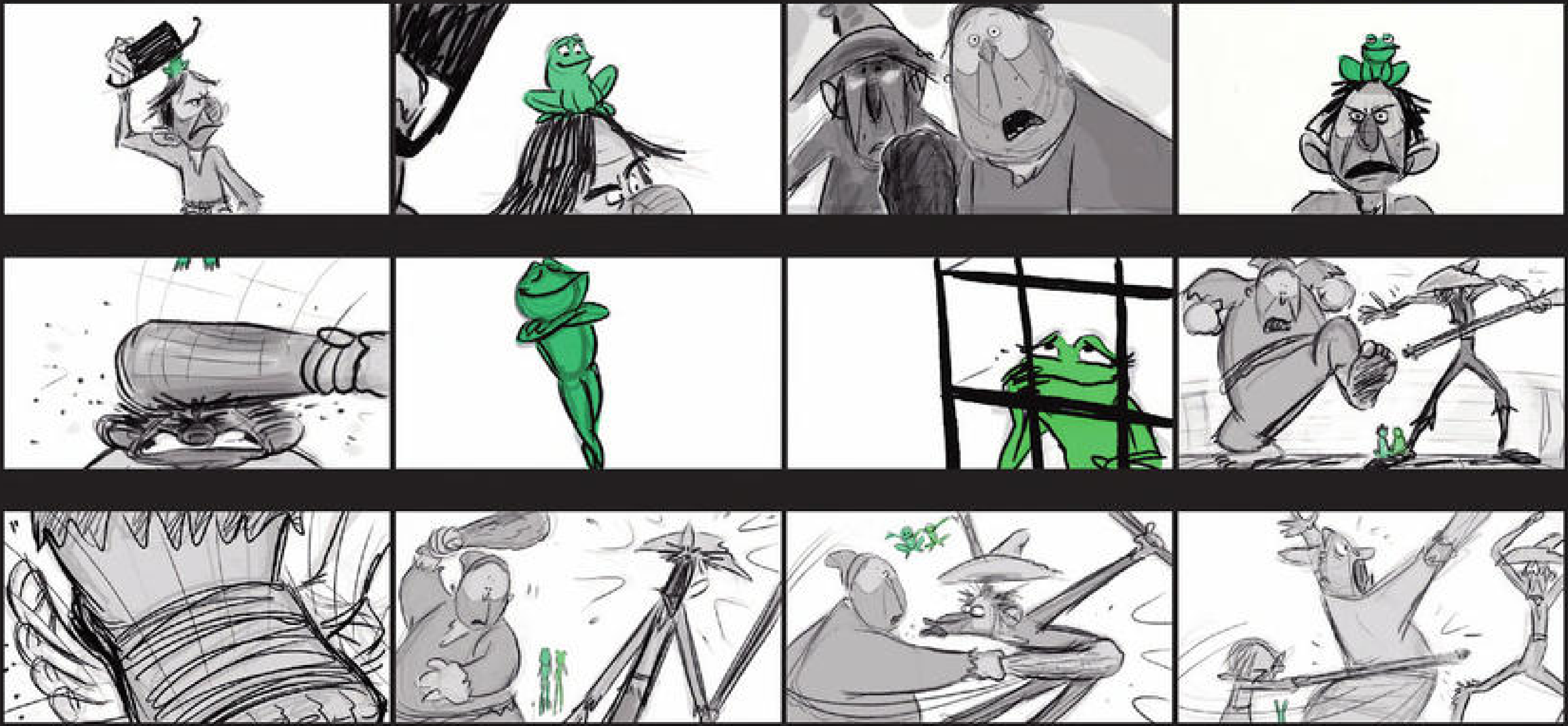


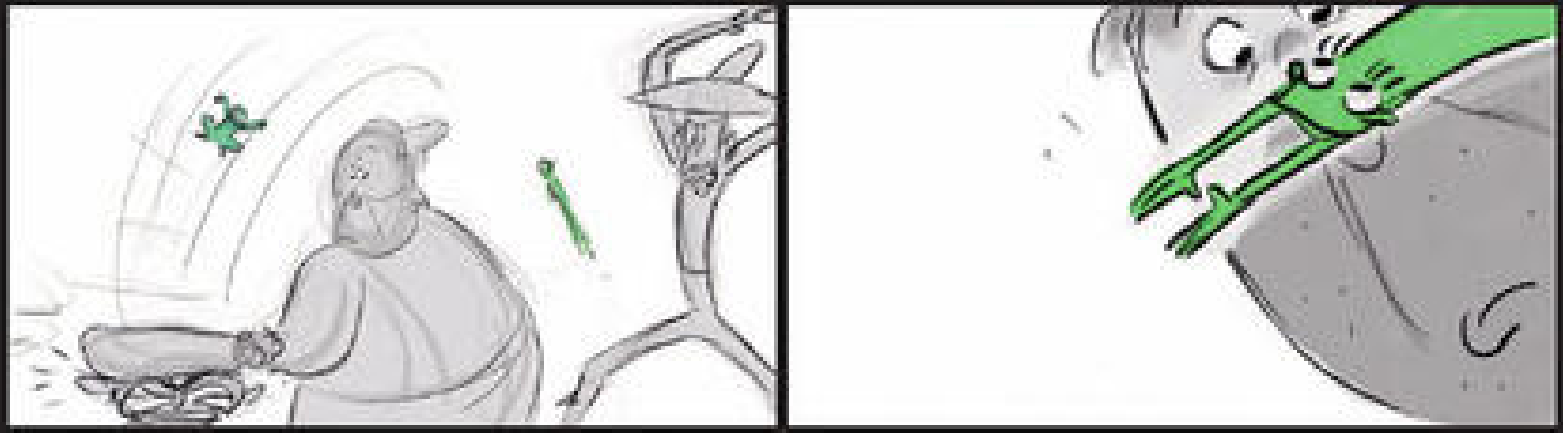




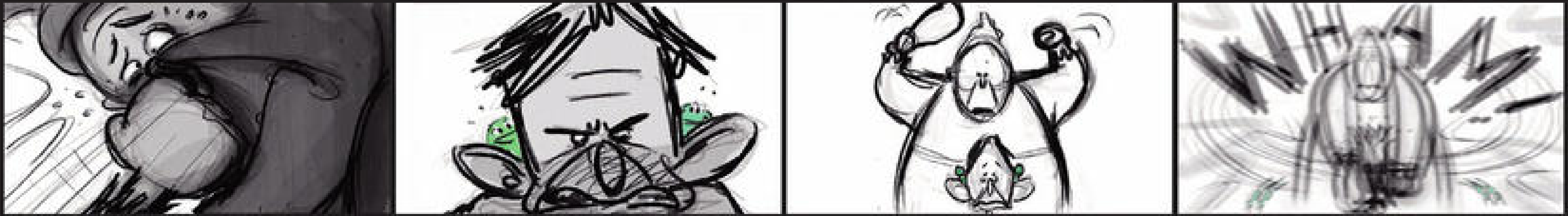


Rik Maki | graphite, digital





"One thing I like to do when I get a sequence is to try and give it a different twist, make it more interesting and fun than what would be expected. Try to actually surprise people!"
—TOM ELLERY, story artist



Storyboards | Tom Ellery | digital

MAMA ODIE

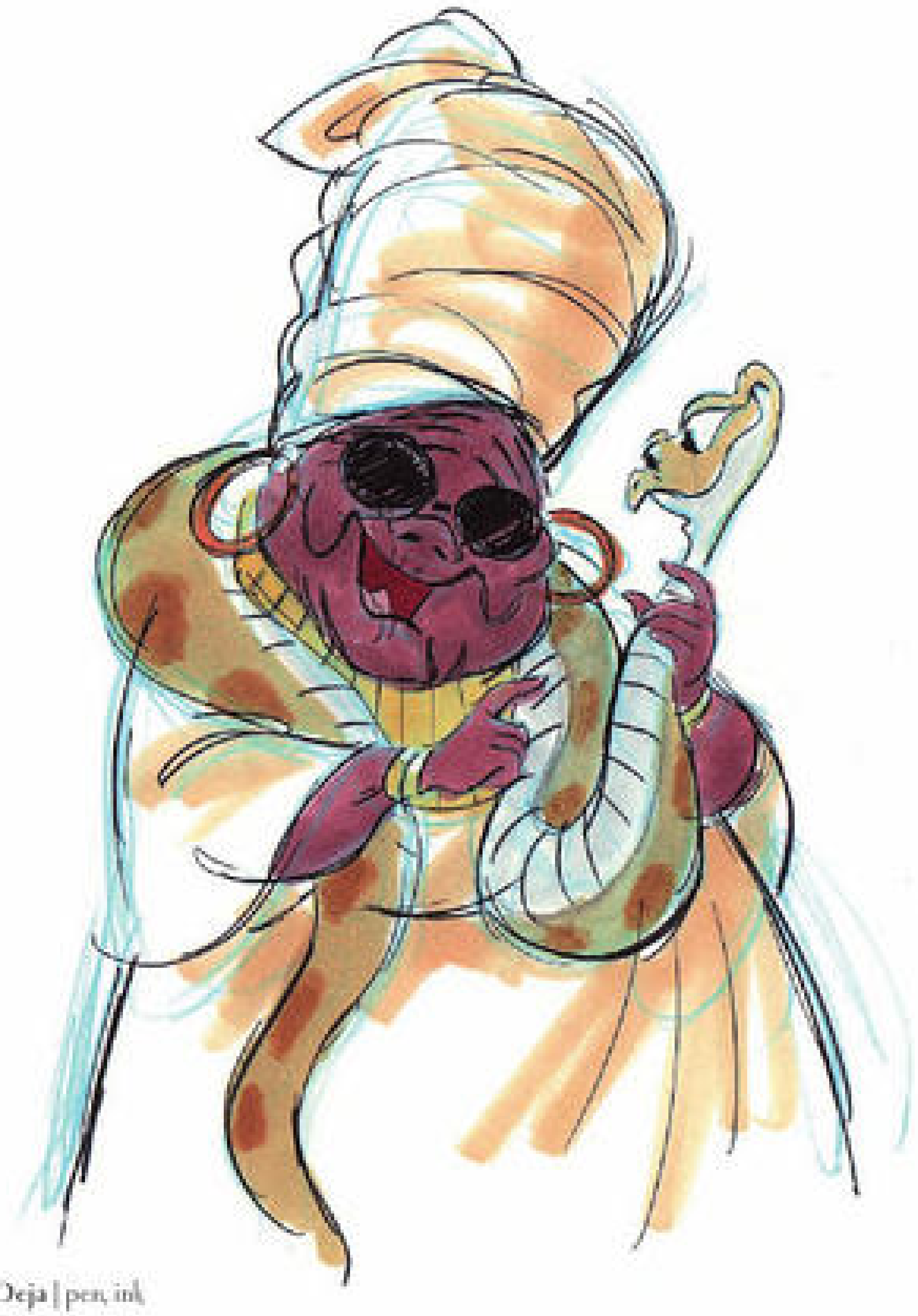
Mama Odie is the bright side of Facilier; she is the Voodoo Fairy Godmother who dwells in "the deepest, darkest part of the Bayou." In an old shrimp boat, improbably wedged in the boughs of a giant tree, Mama Odie and her pet snake, Juju, dispense spells, heyacalls, and gris-gris to those in need.

"I remember completely gravitating toward Mama Odie," supervising animator Andreas Deja says. "This little, shriveled-up old woman who was eccentric and has this seeing-eye snake; everything about her was just so unusual."

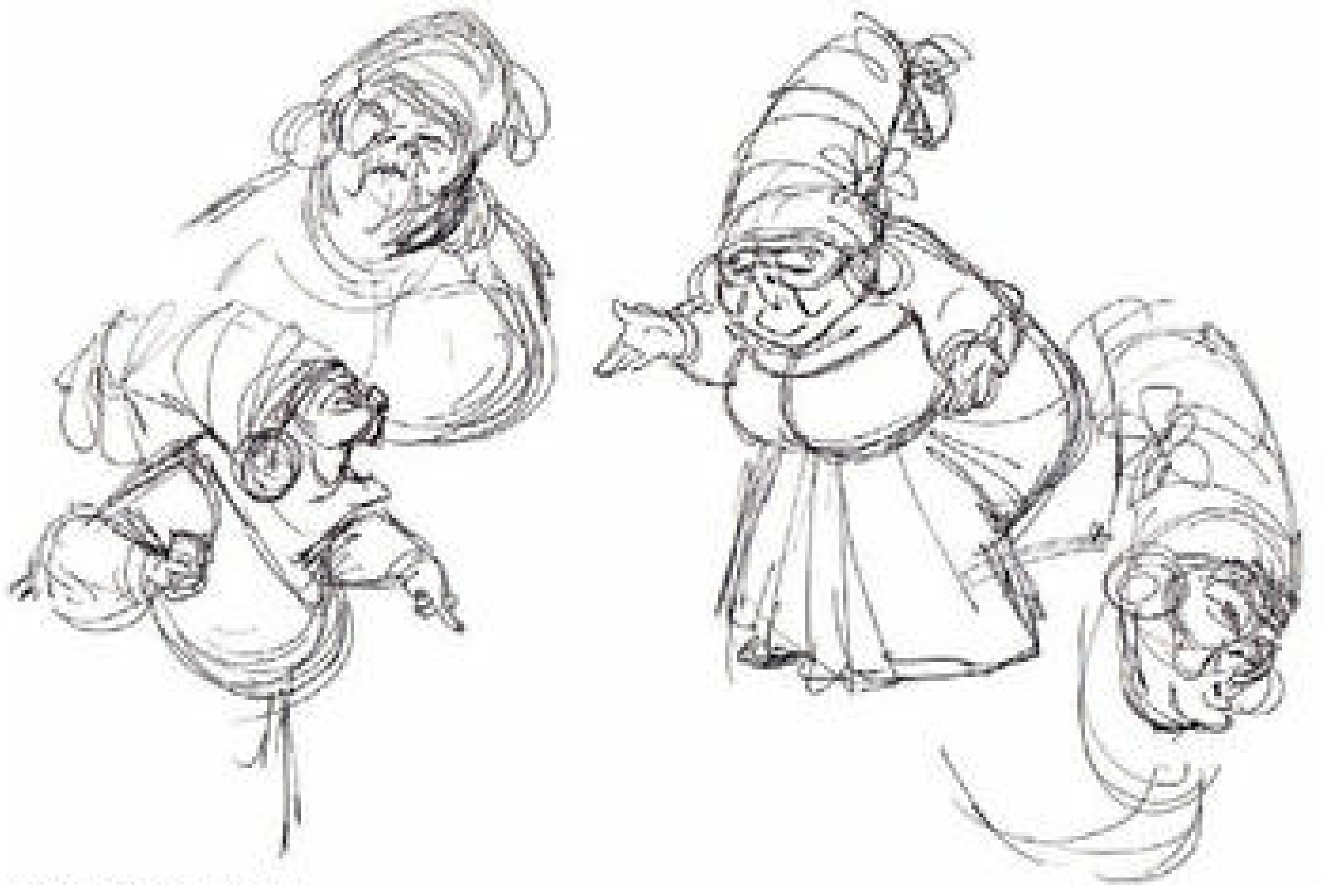
Deja began by working with the existing character design. "I think they were gravitating toward one sketch that Sue Nichols had done. Yet it was very graphic, this triangular shape with almost no legs. It was semi-abstract, but the idea was good. How do you take something like that and make it workable? So my first attempt, I started scribbling and scribbling and not really going that way.

"I initially had developed a Mama Odie that was very round and voluptuous, with a lot of fat all over. Ron and John liked it, but put it on ice for a while. And then, months later, they said 'Well, this is great, you have a really nice feeling for that character, but let's just zero in on this one Sue Nichols sketch.' They had me go back to where we started, and I think they were right in going that way."

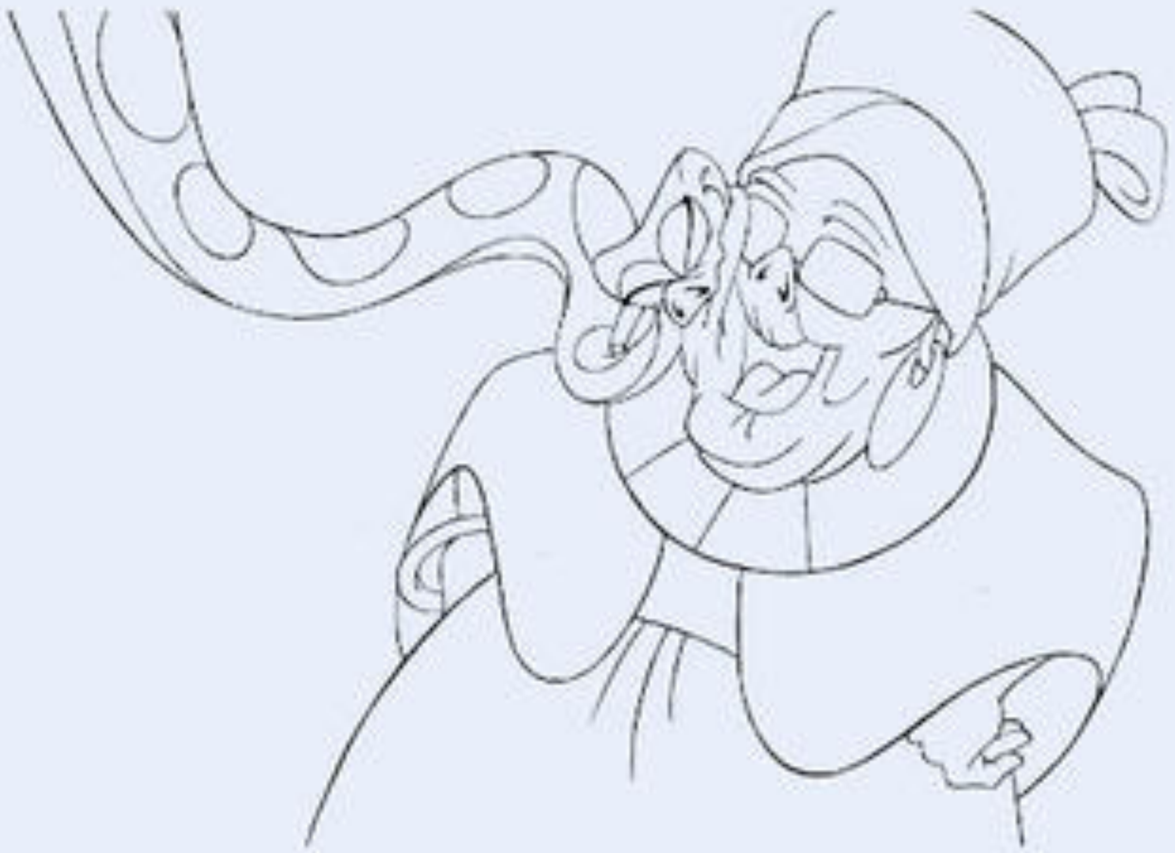
Rob Edwards remembers how the animator inspired the story. "There was a time when Mama Odie was in danger of becoming superfluous, but we knew that as an actor Andreas is so awesome we had to give him something, and just kept going back to the drawing board. It's like writing for a great performer, and the same is true of these animators, where you just say 'I can't wait to see what he does!' It fires you up. It pushes you to a level that you may not have gone to before."



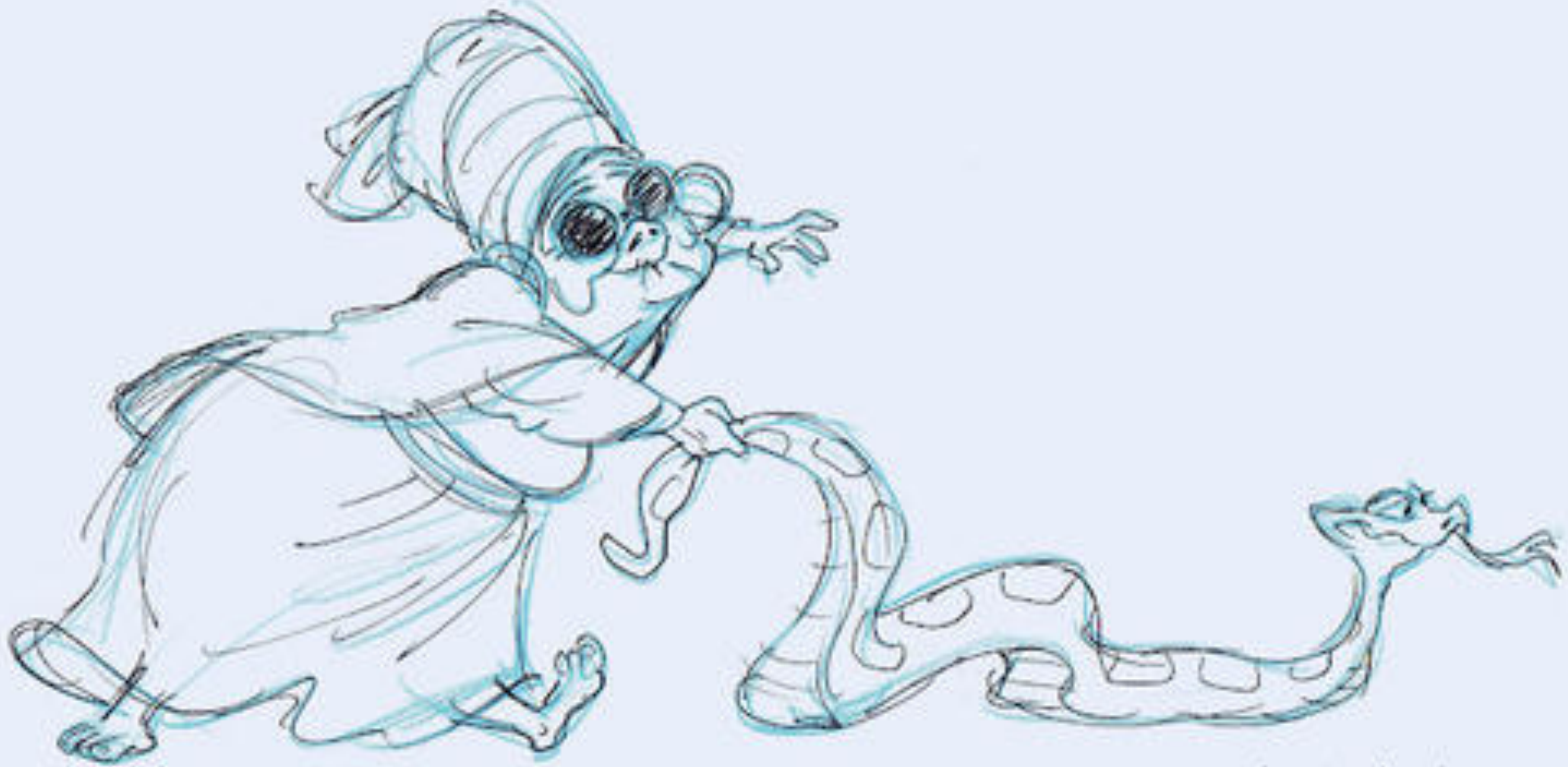
Andreas Deja | pen, ink



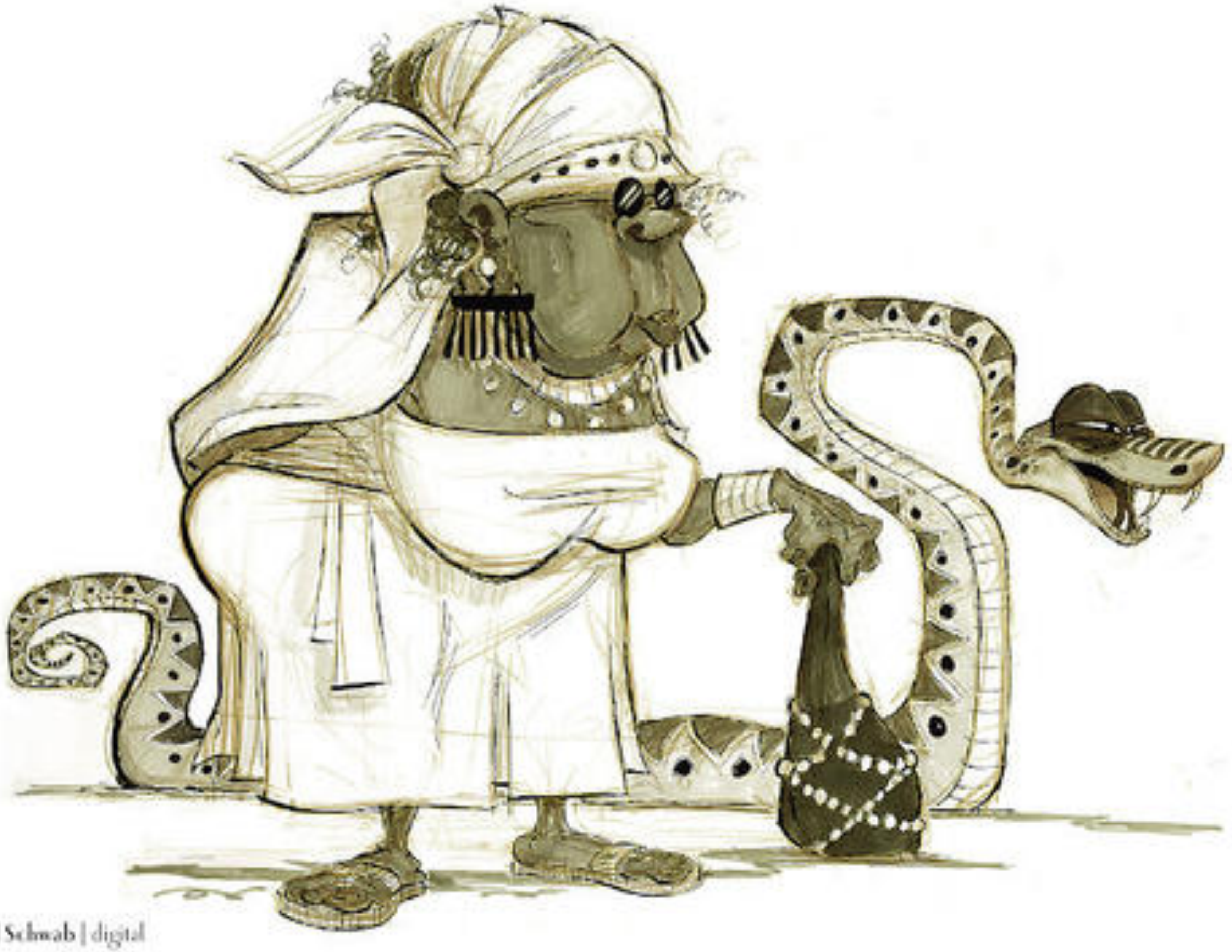
Andreas Deja | graphite



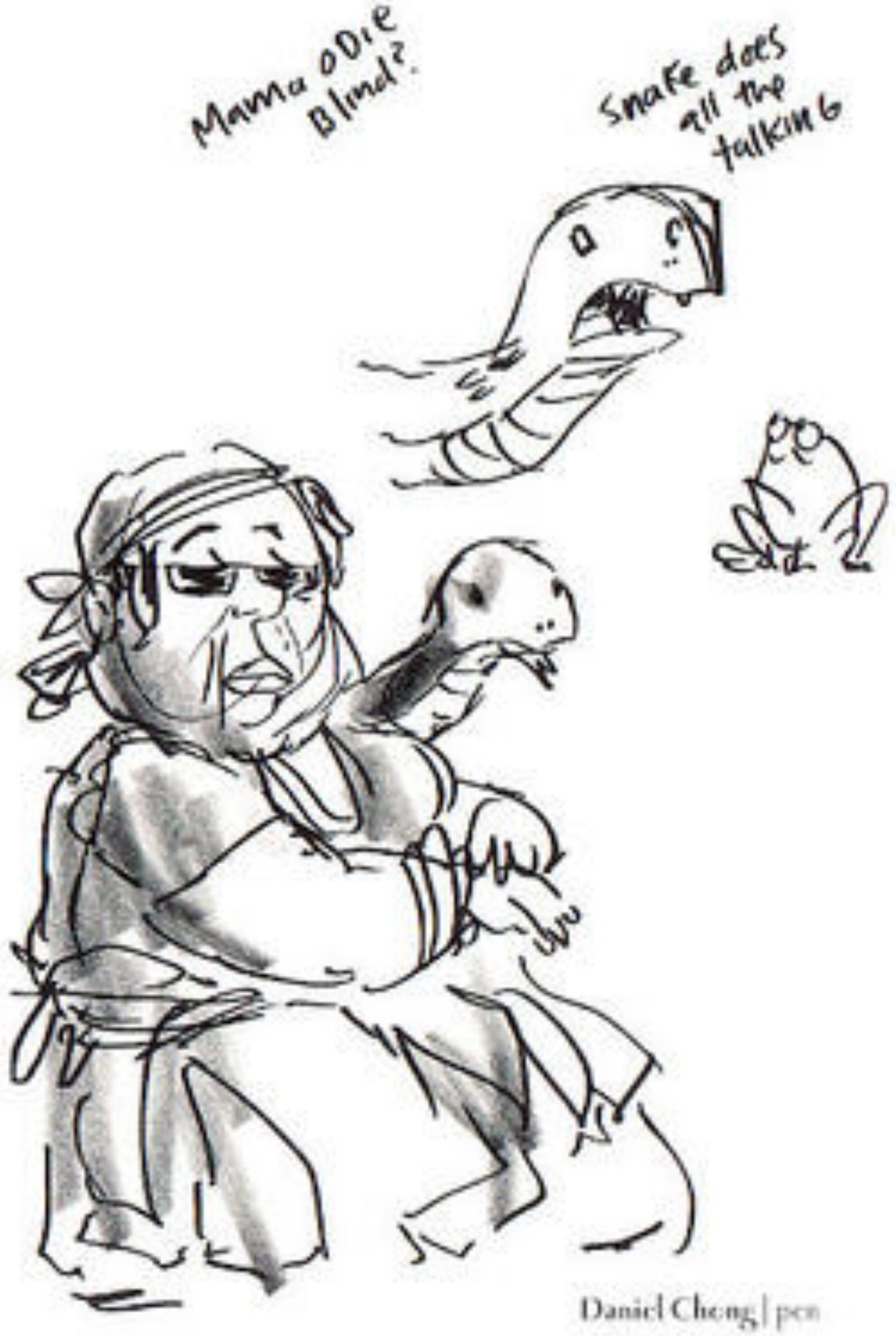
Kathy Bailey | graphite



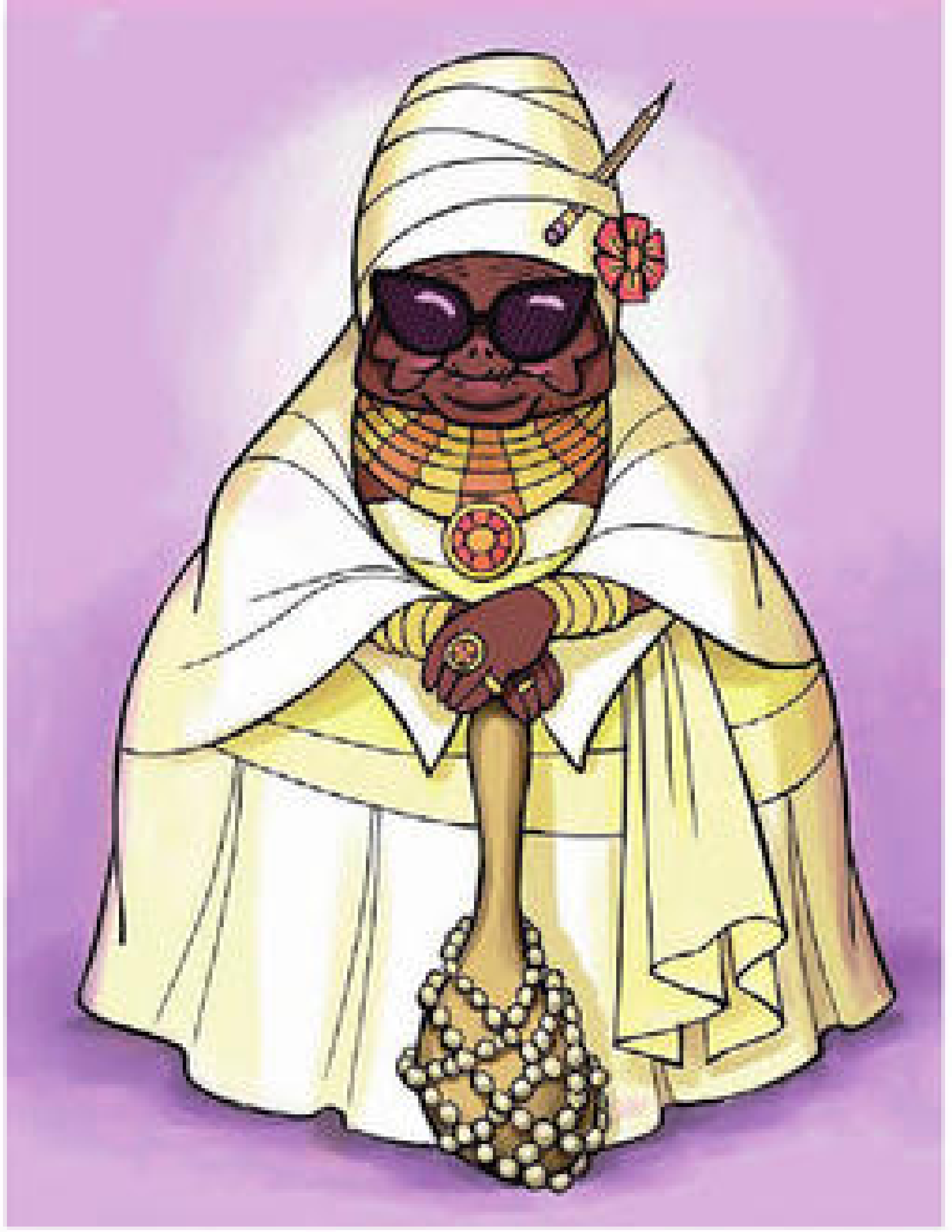
Andreas Deja | graphite



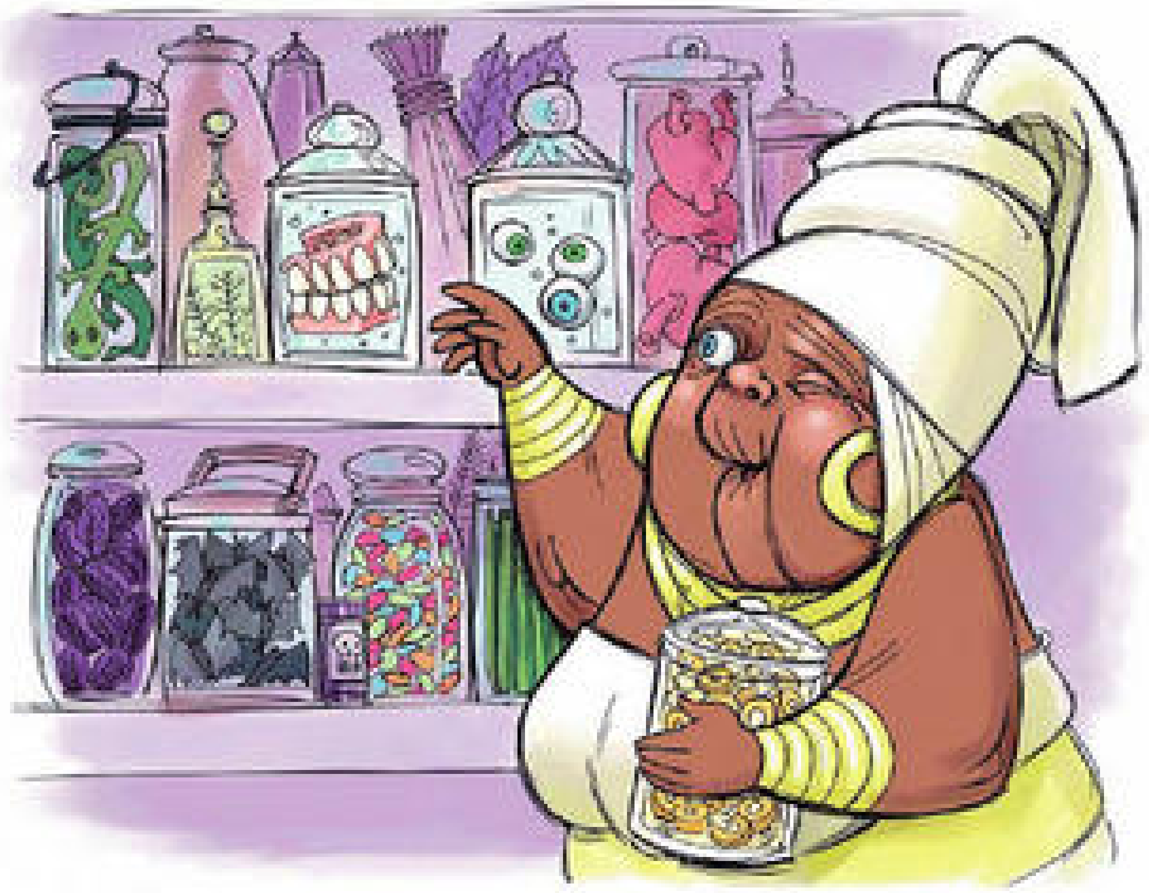
Bill Schwab | digital


Mama Odie Blind?
Snake does all the talking

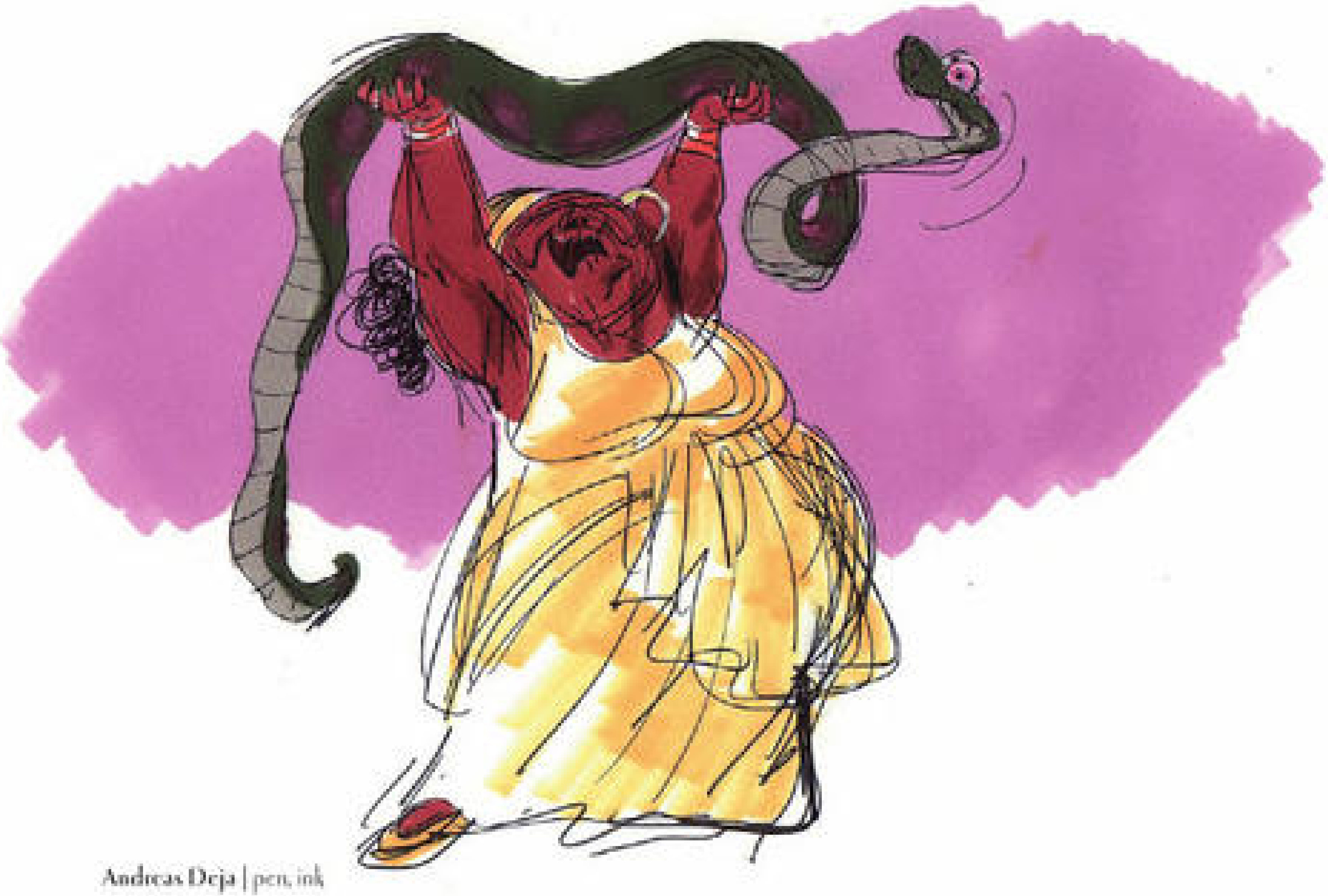
Daniel Cheng | pen



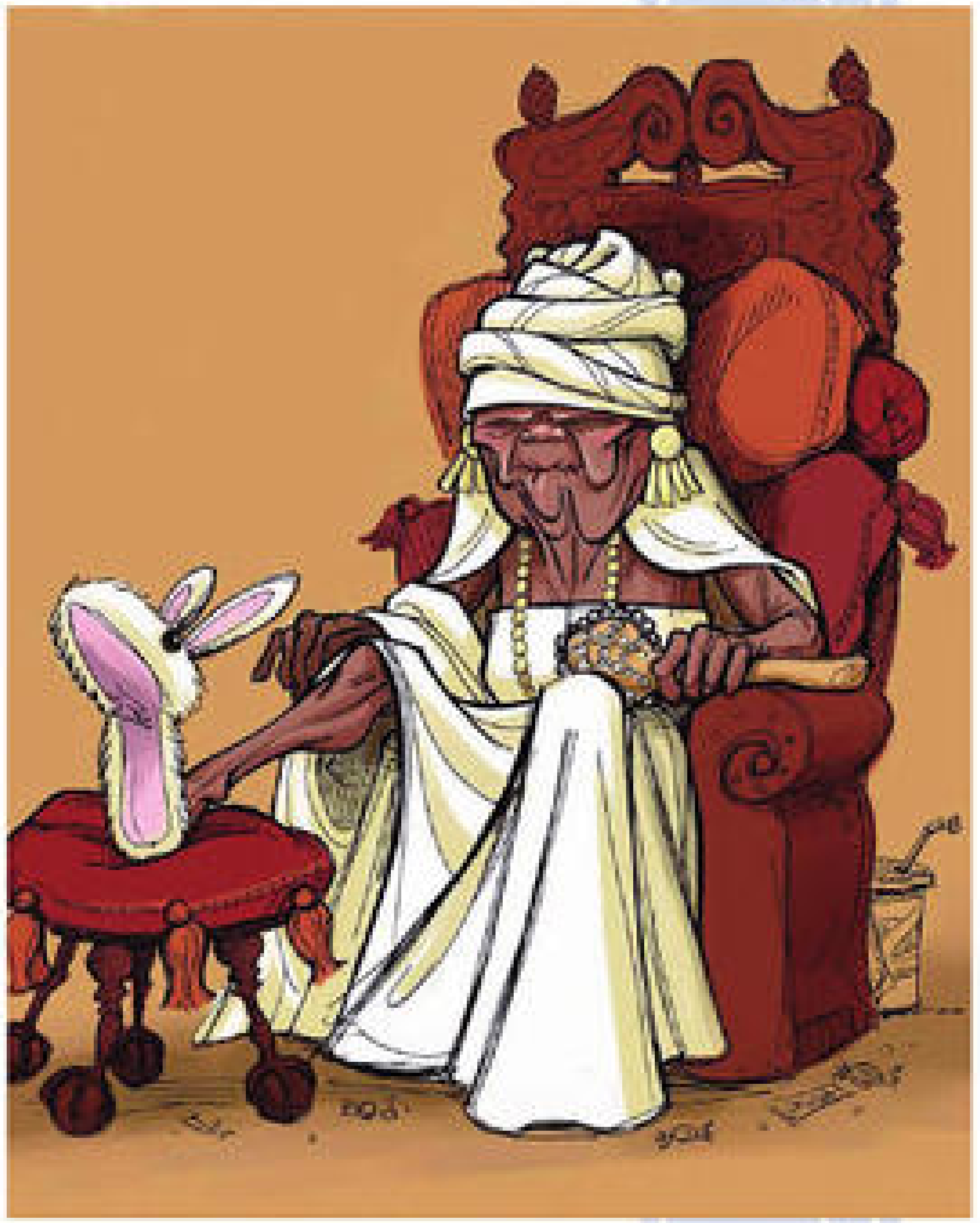
Sue Nichols | digital



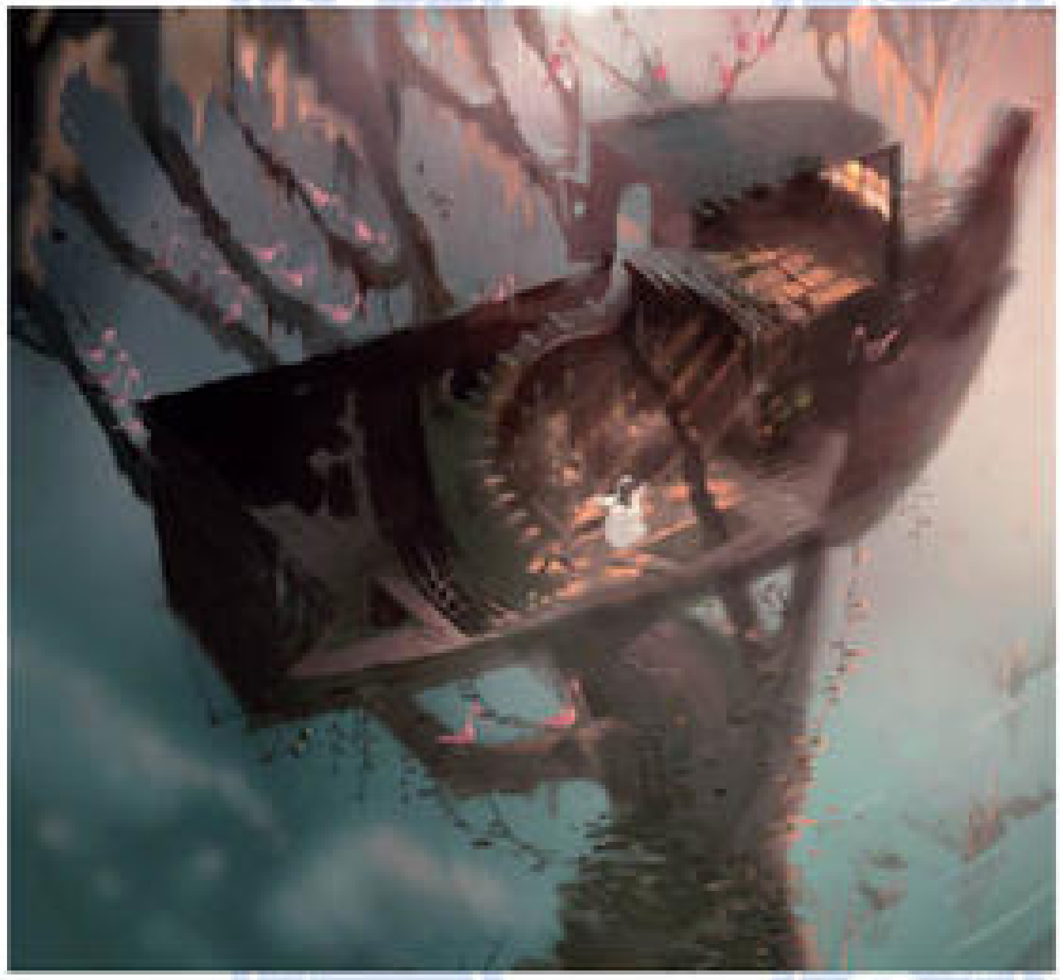
Sue Nichols | digital

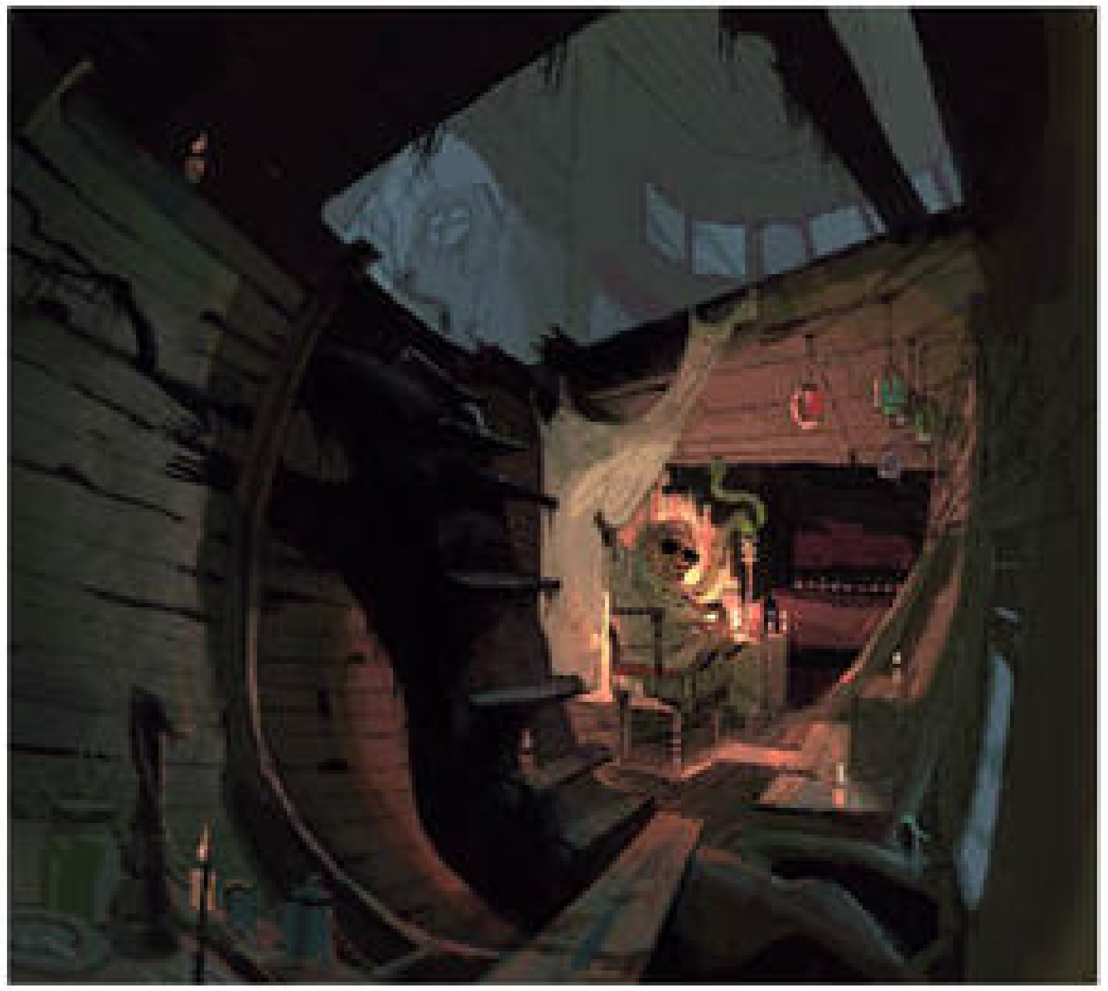


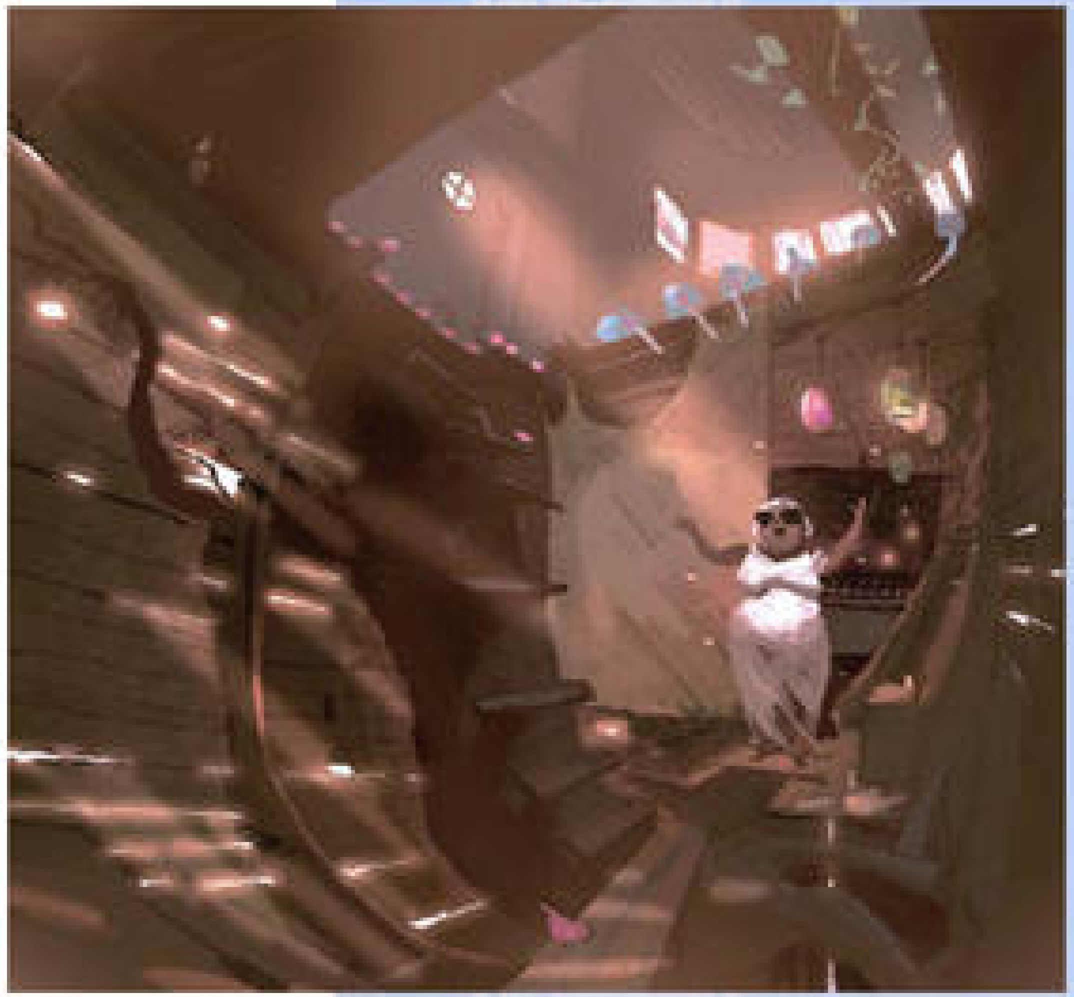
Andreas Deja | pen, ink

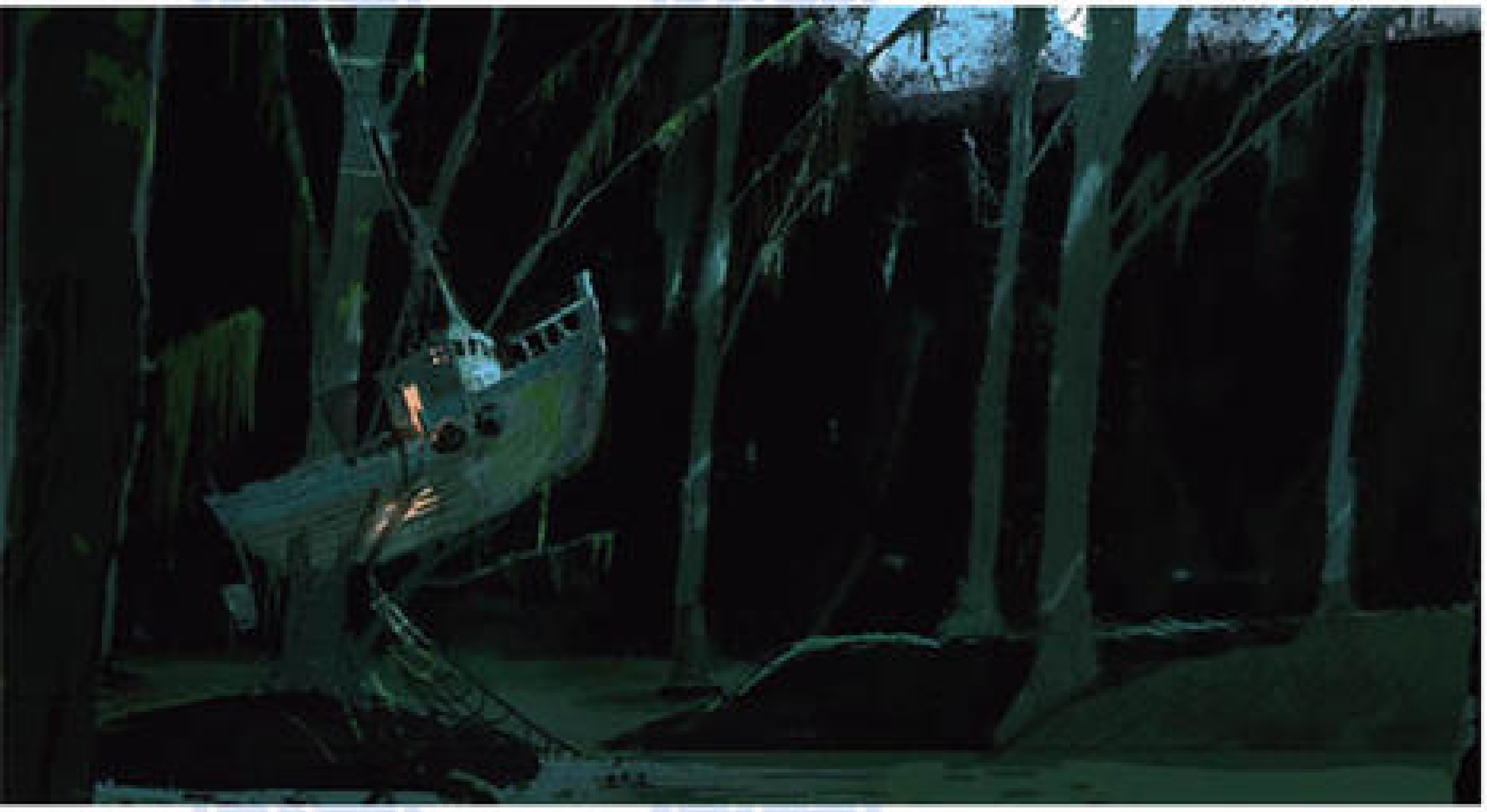


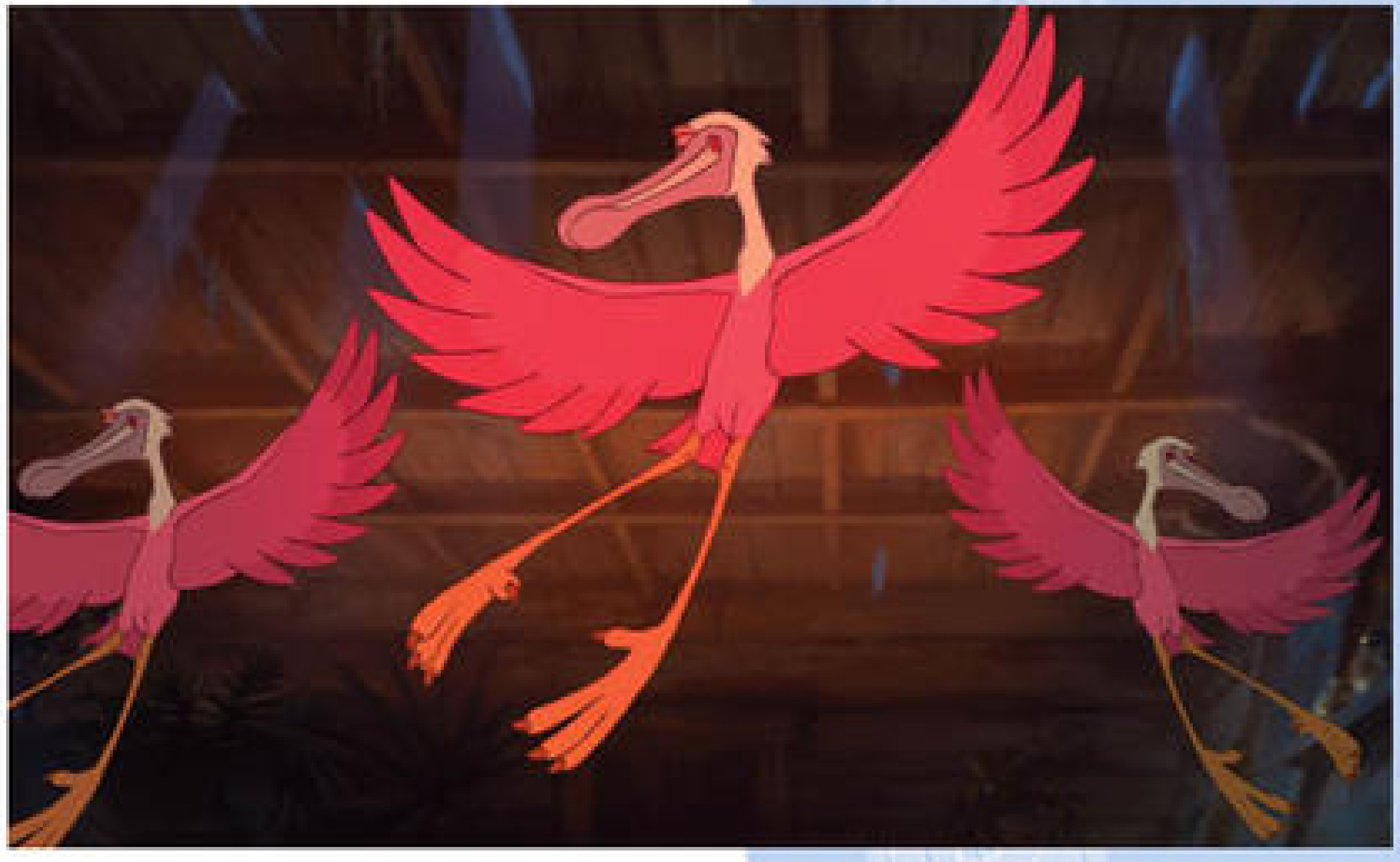
Sue Nichols | digital

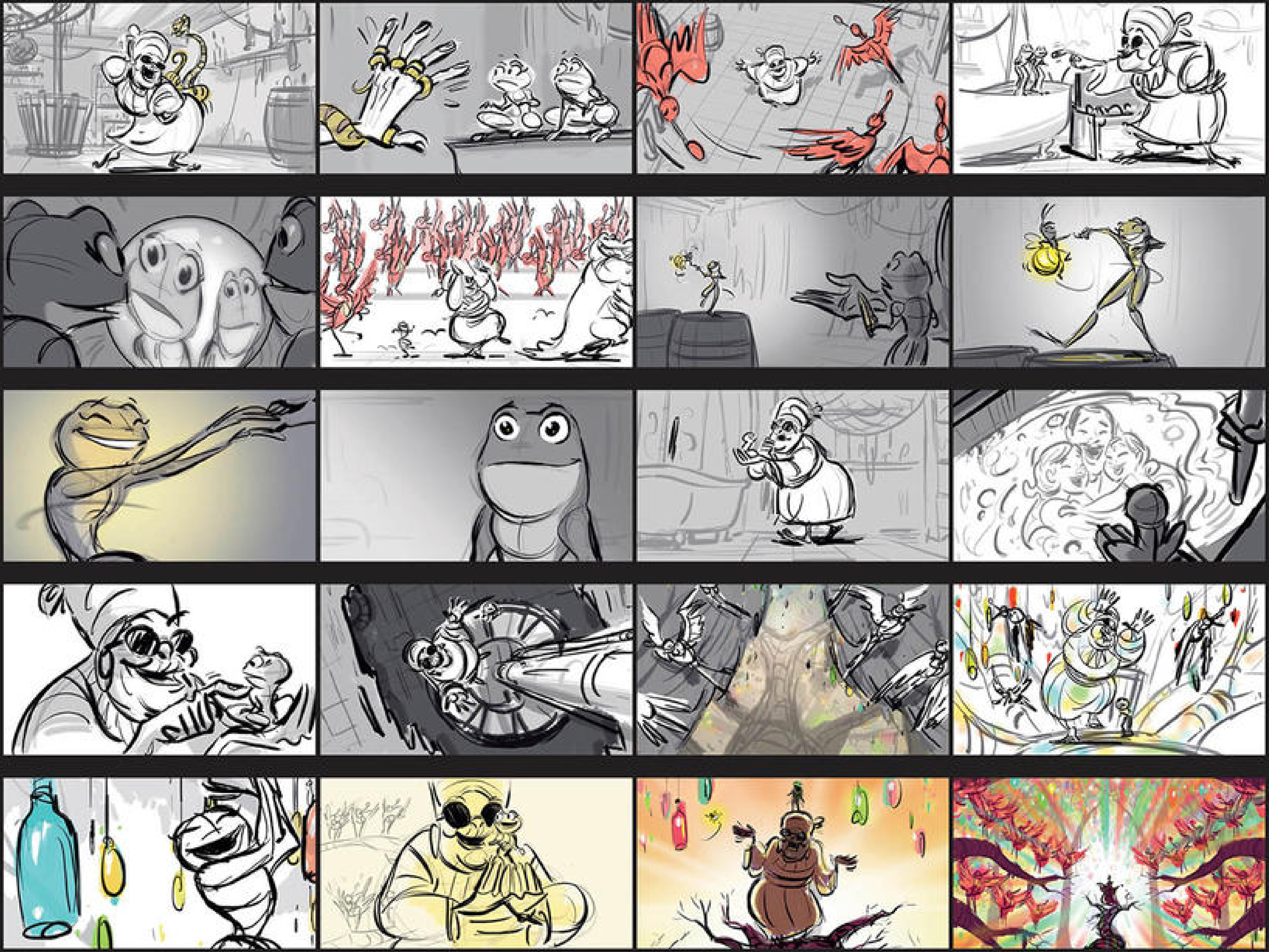






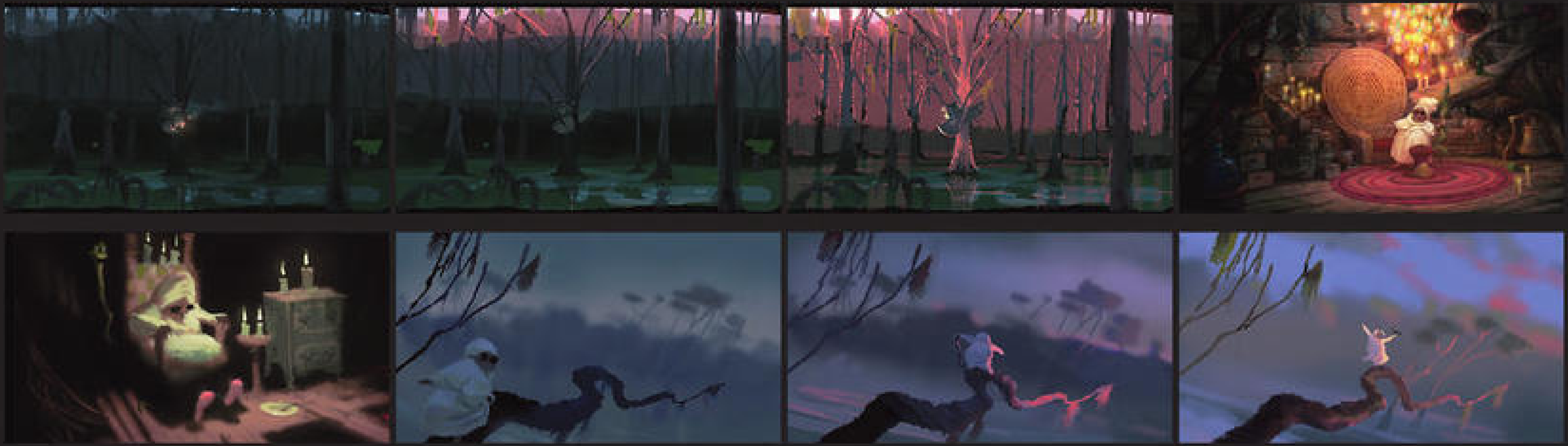




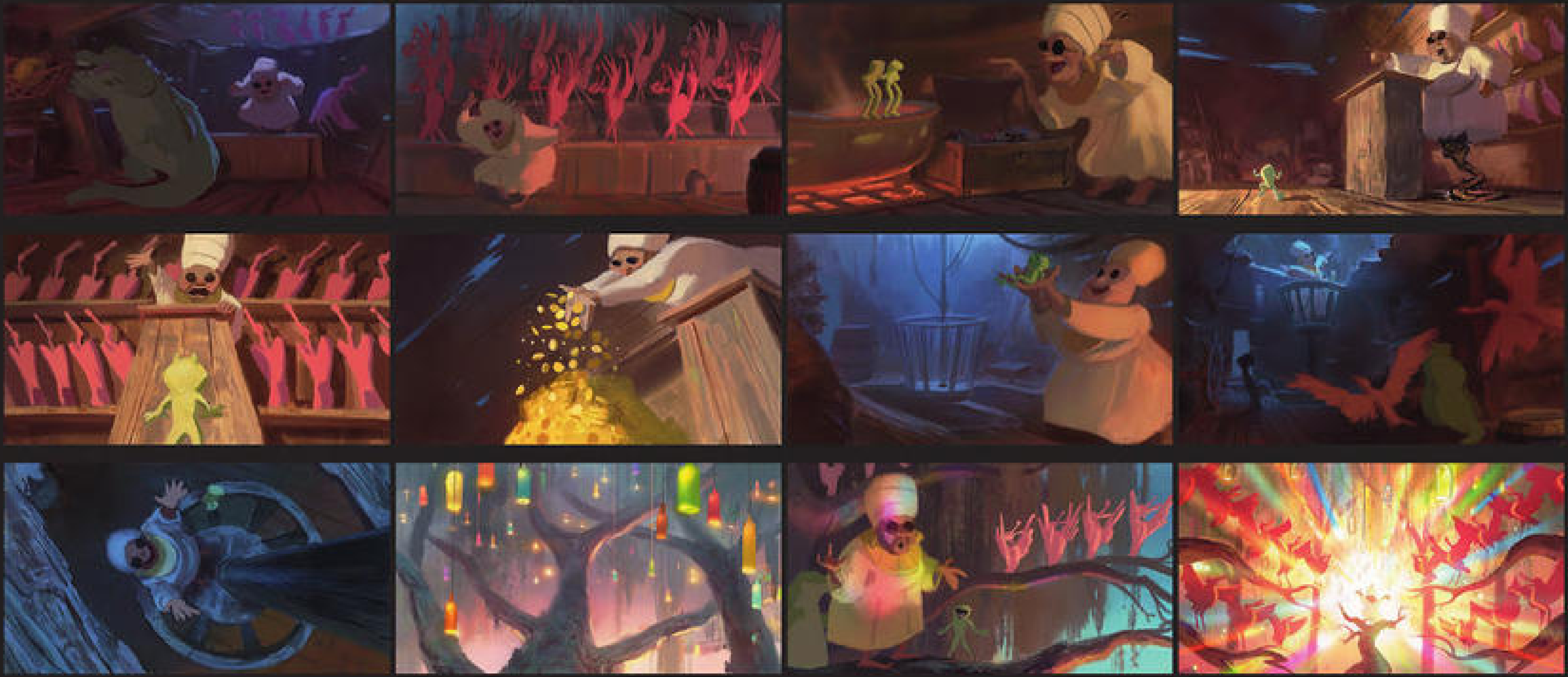


Sue Nichols Maginot

Sue Nichols Maginot



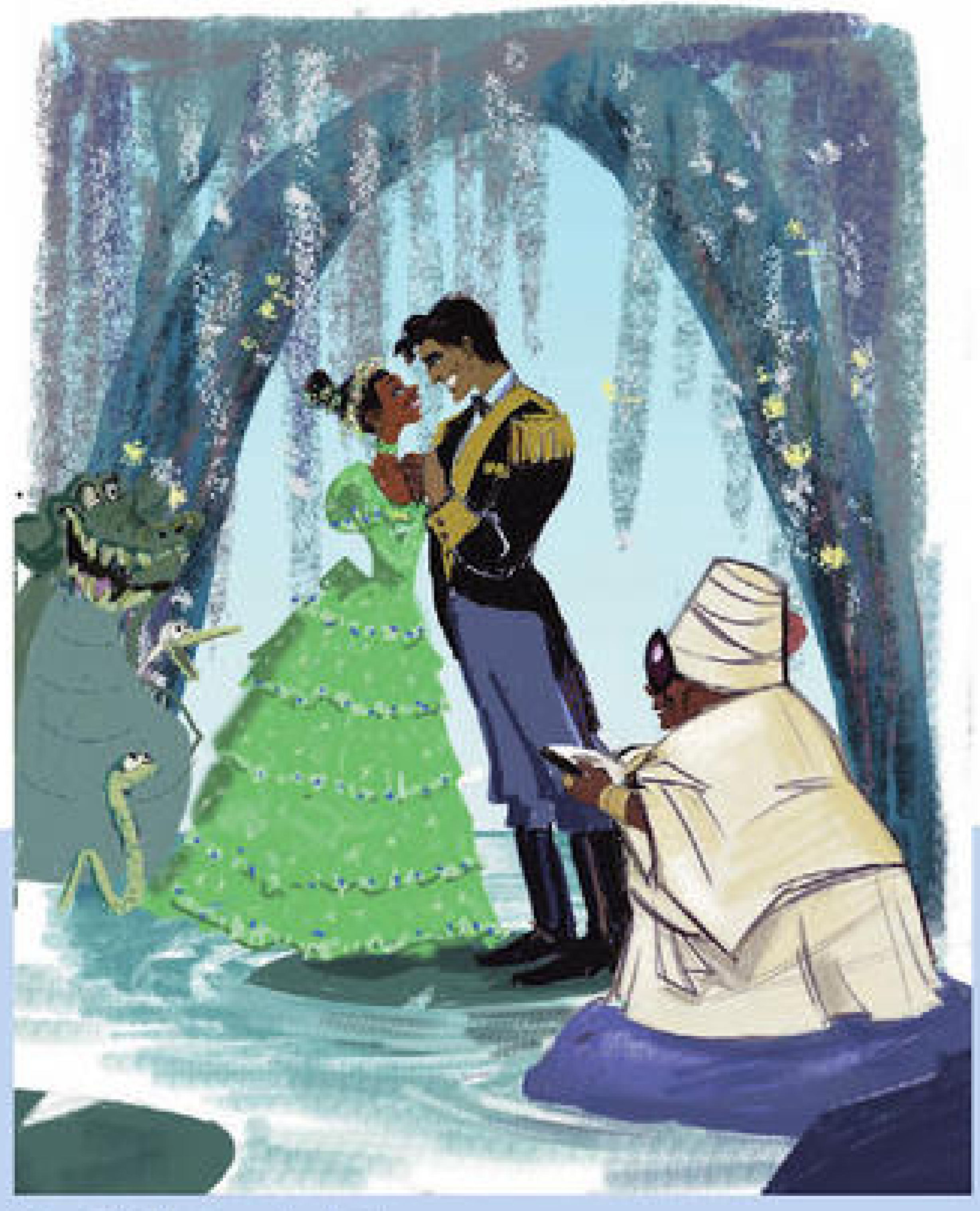
Color Keys | Chris Appelhans | digital



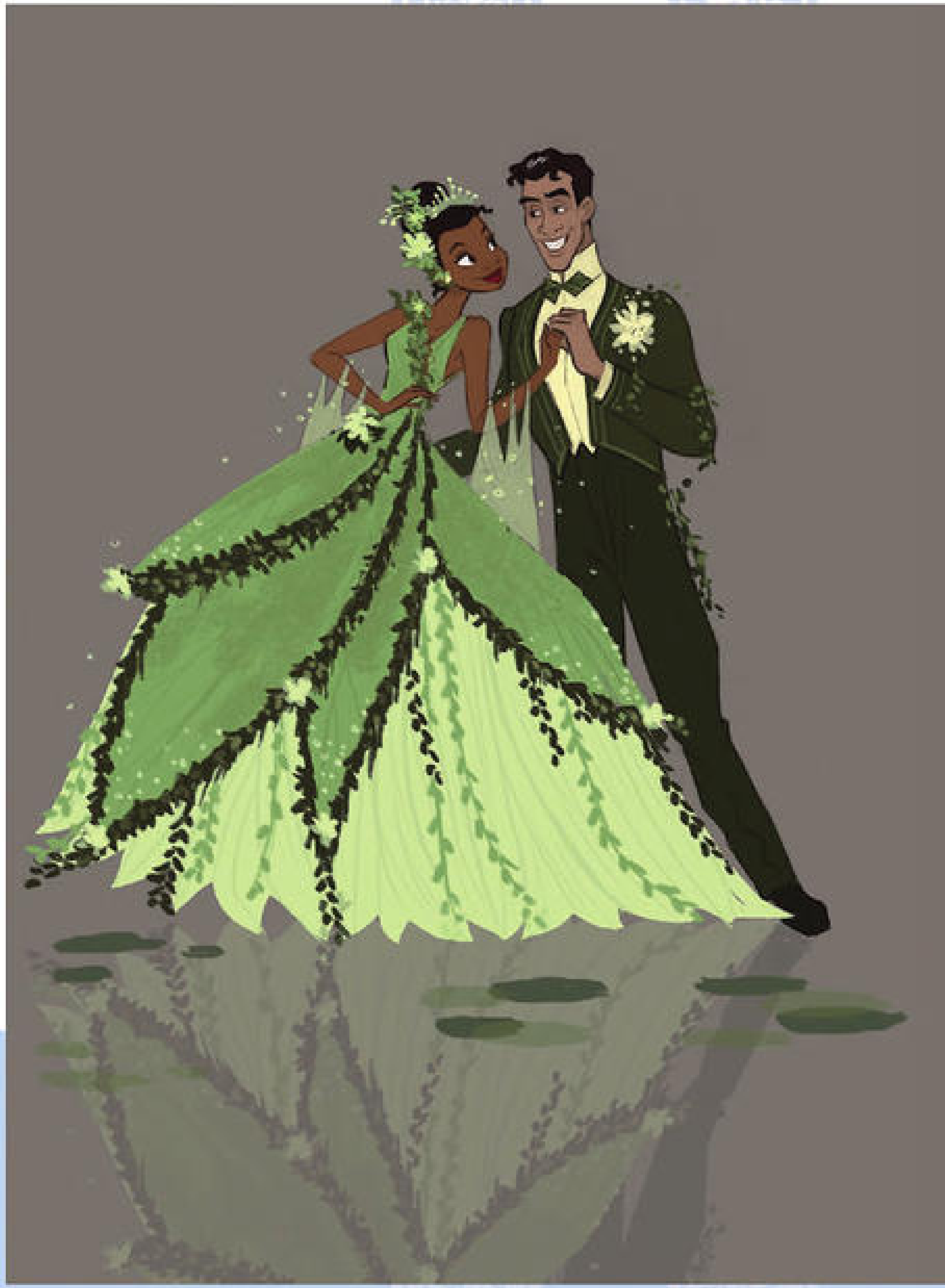
Color Keys | Paul Felix | digital

EVER AFTER

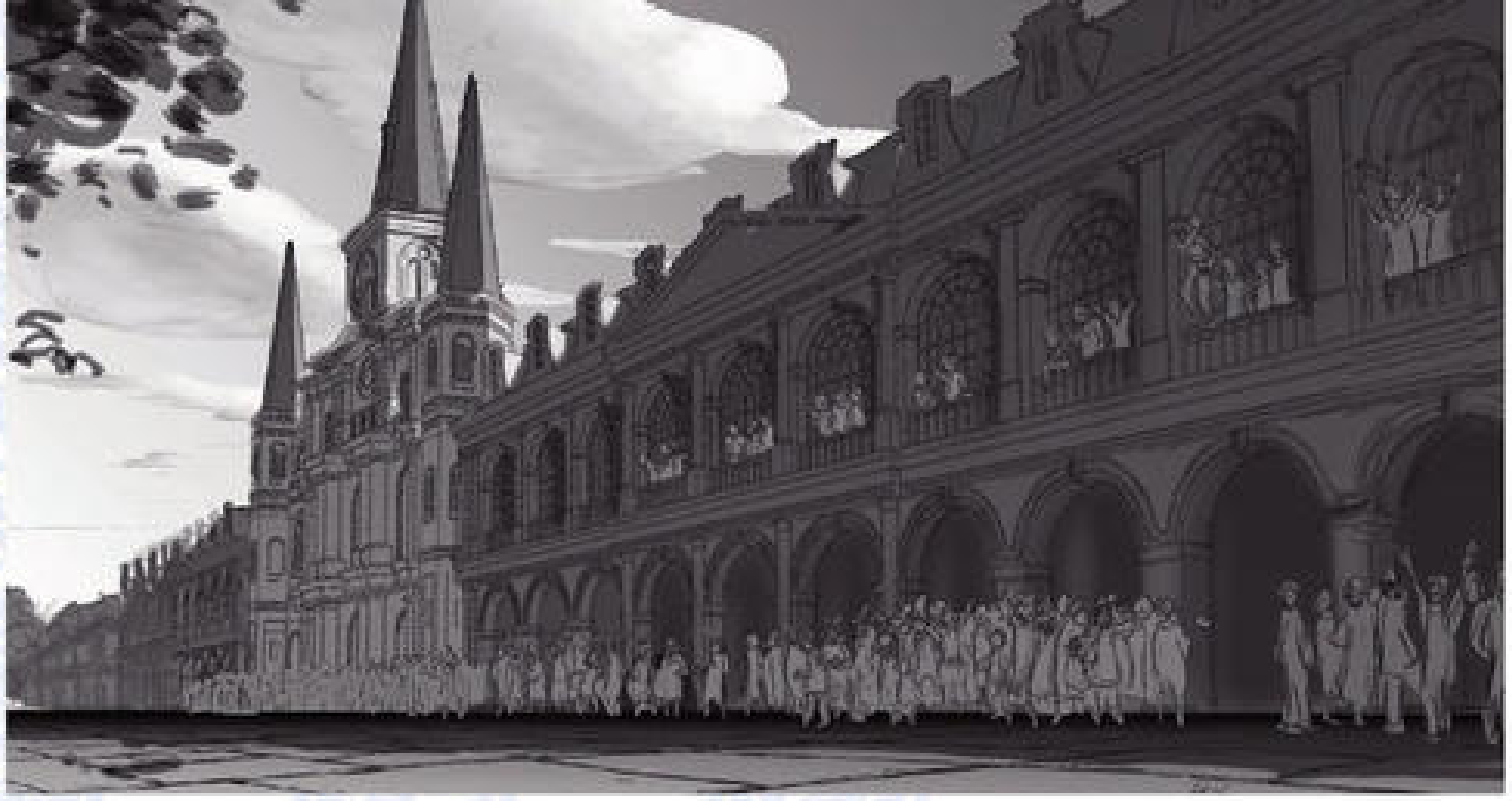
With all of the storytelling artists in place and committed to the welfare of this new fairy tale and its many nuances of character, plot, and visual sophistication, there is no doubt that a happy ending will await the princess and the frog.



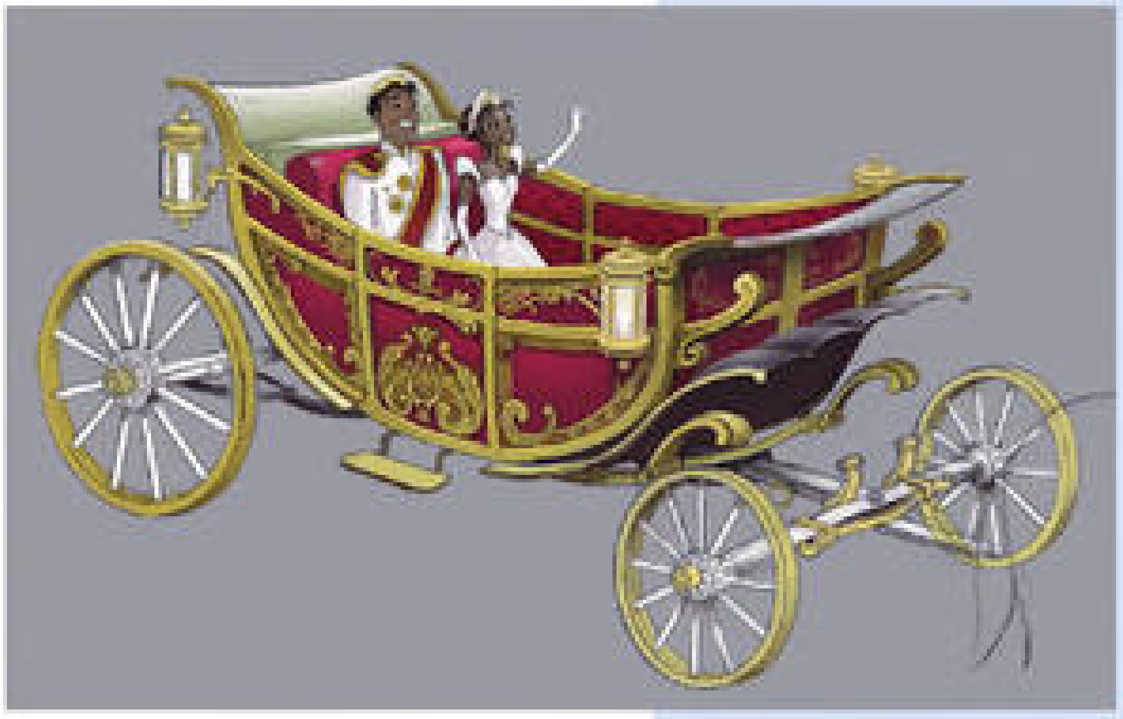
John Musker, Bill Schwab | graphite, digital



Bill Schwab, Lorelay Bove | digital

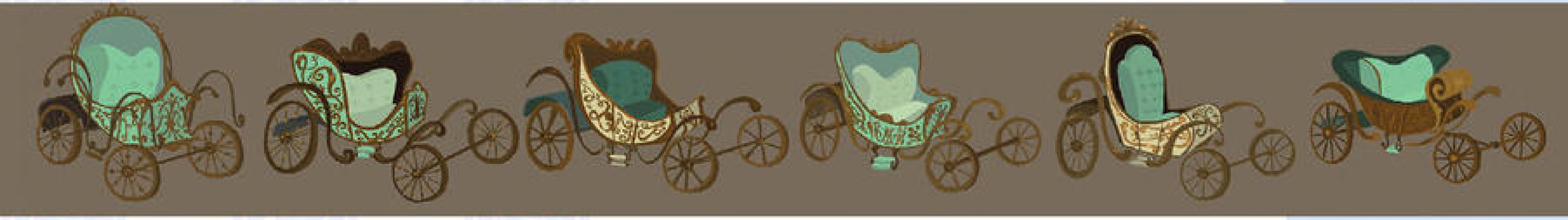


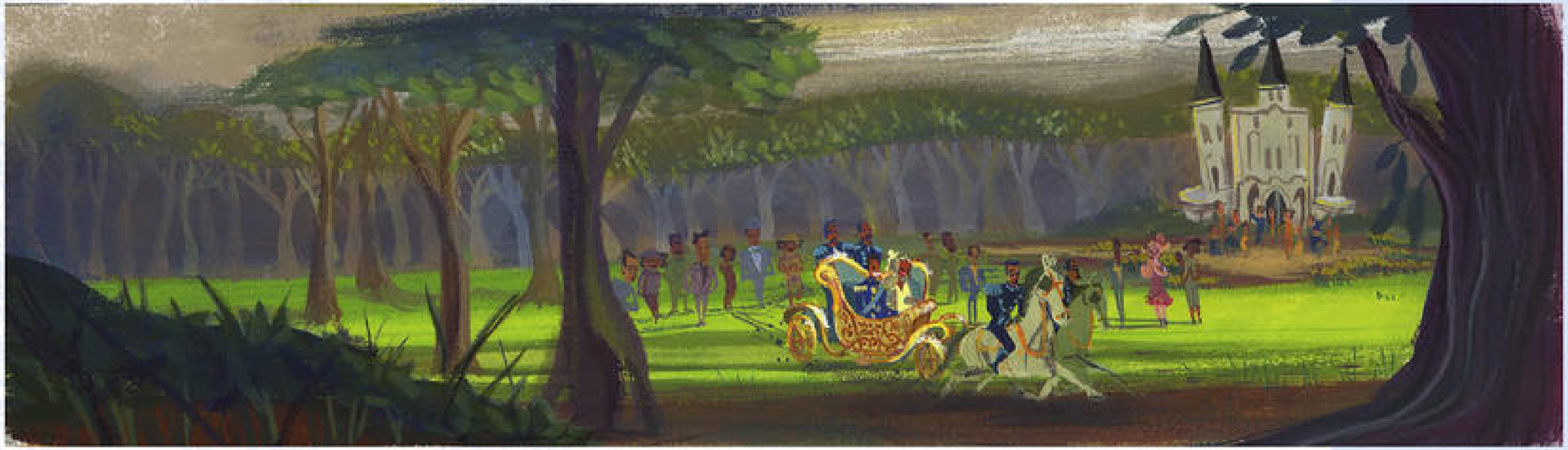
Yong Zhong | digital



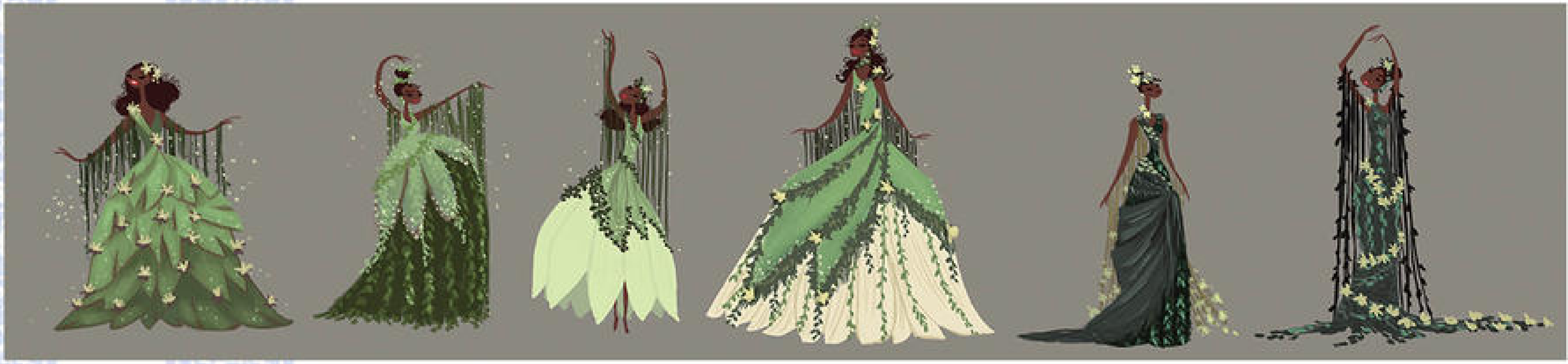
Jim Martin | digital

Loreley Bove | digital



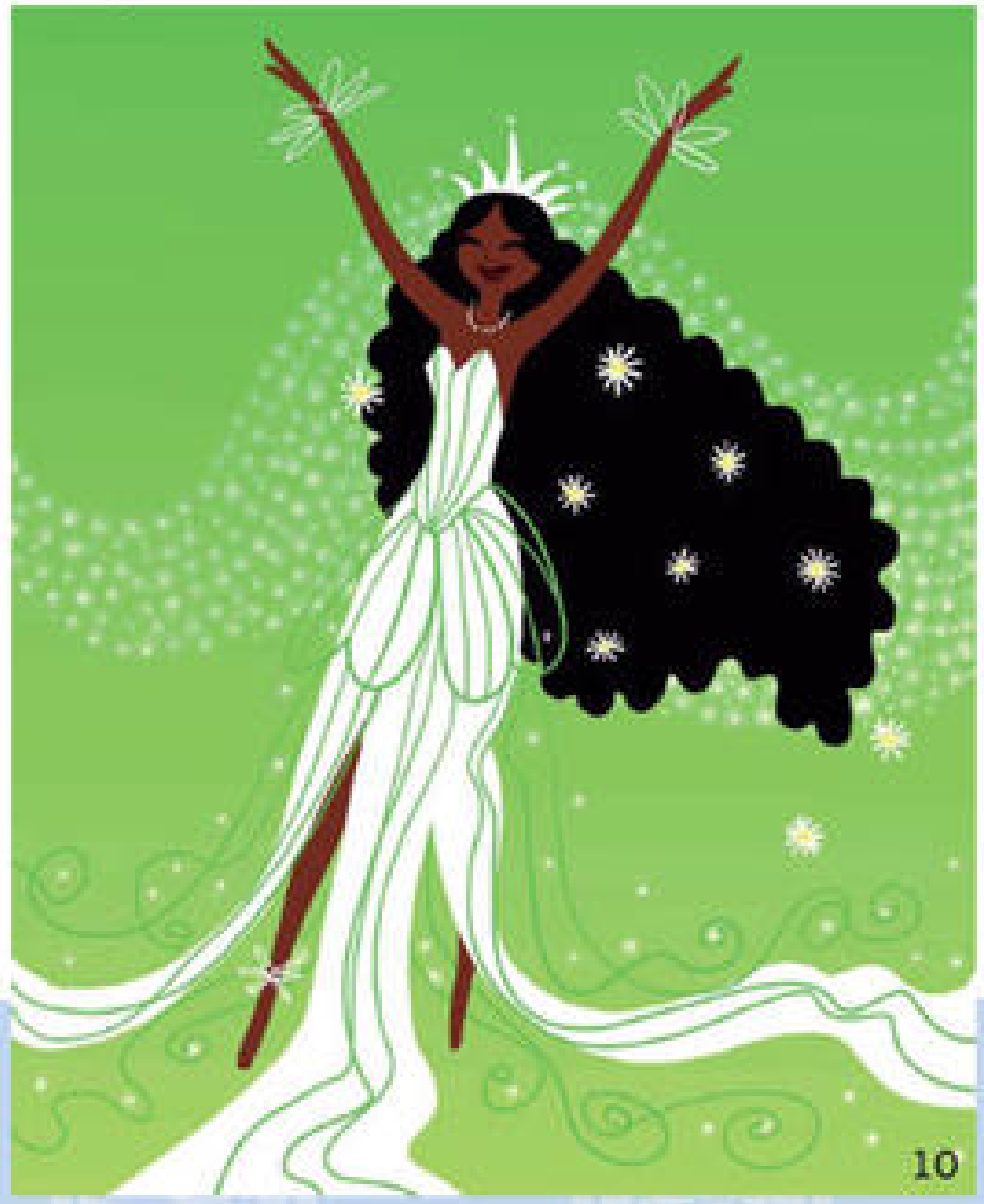


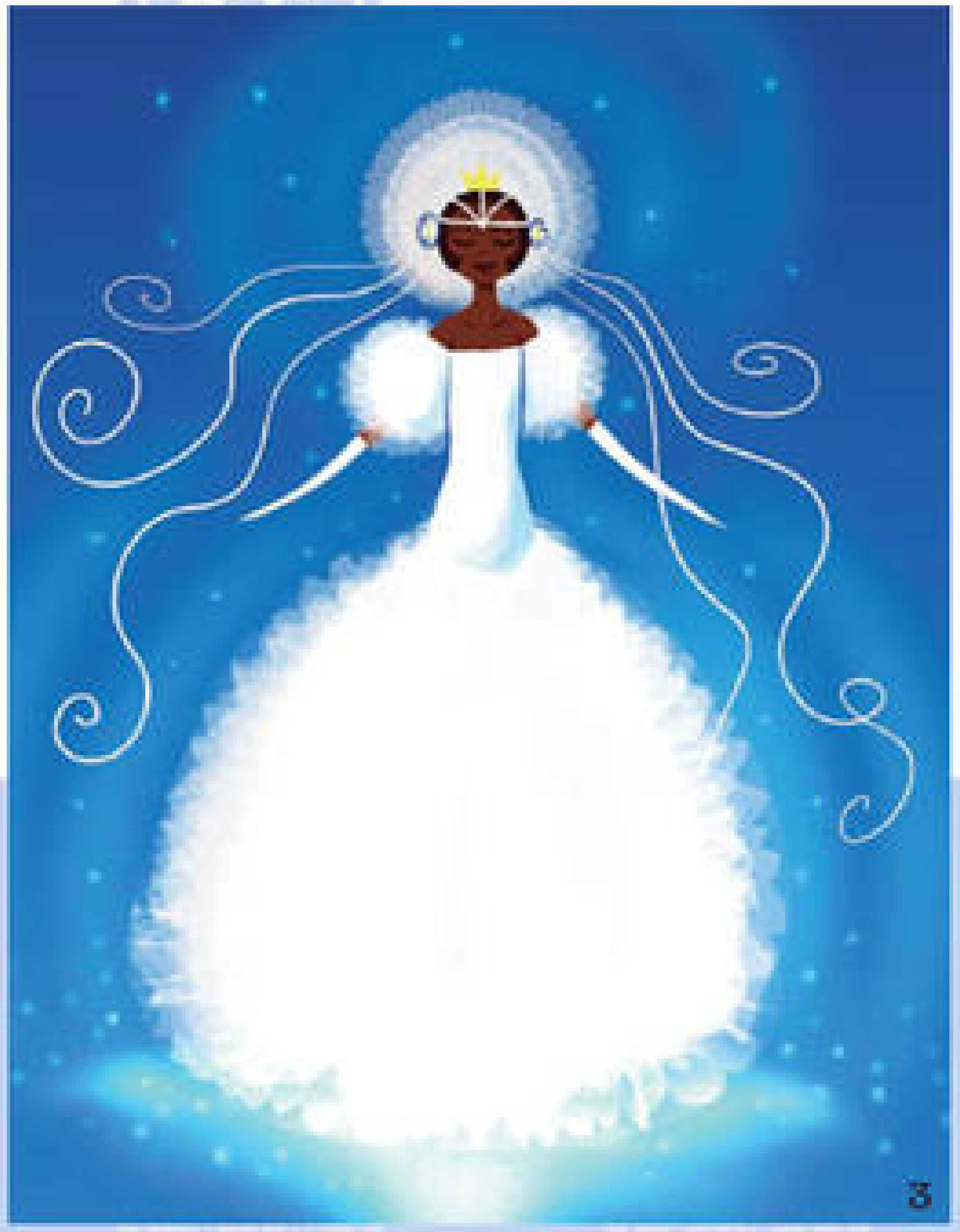
Loreley Bove | gouache paint



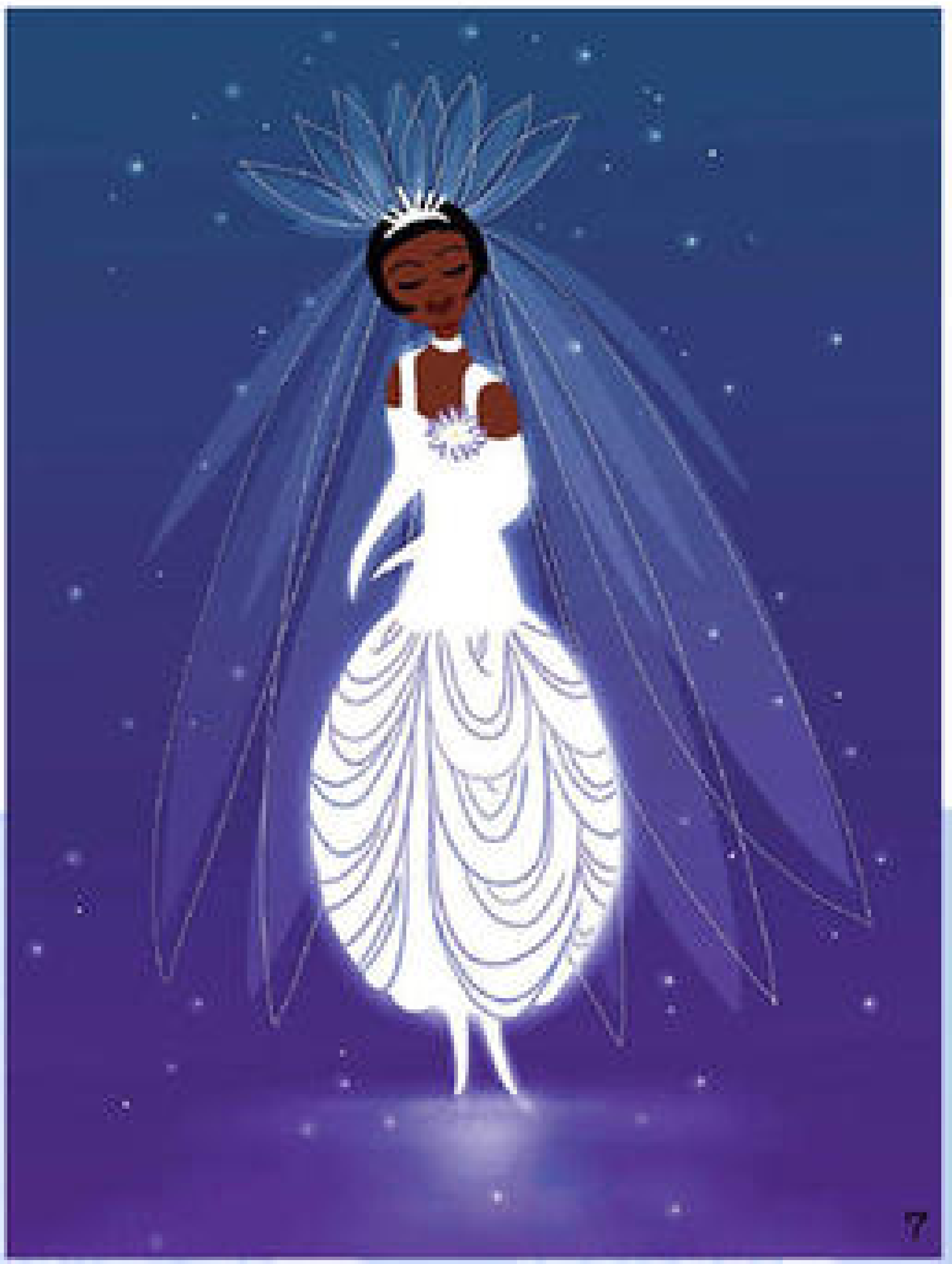
Lorelay Bove | digital

Sue Nicols | digital

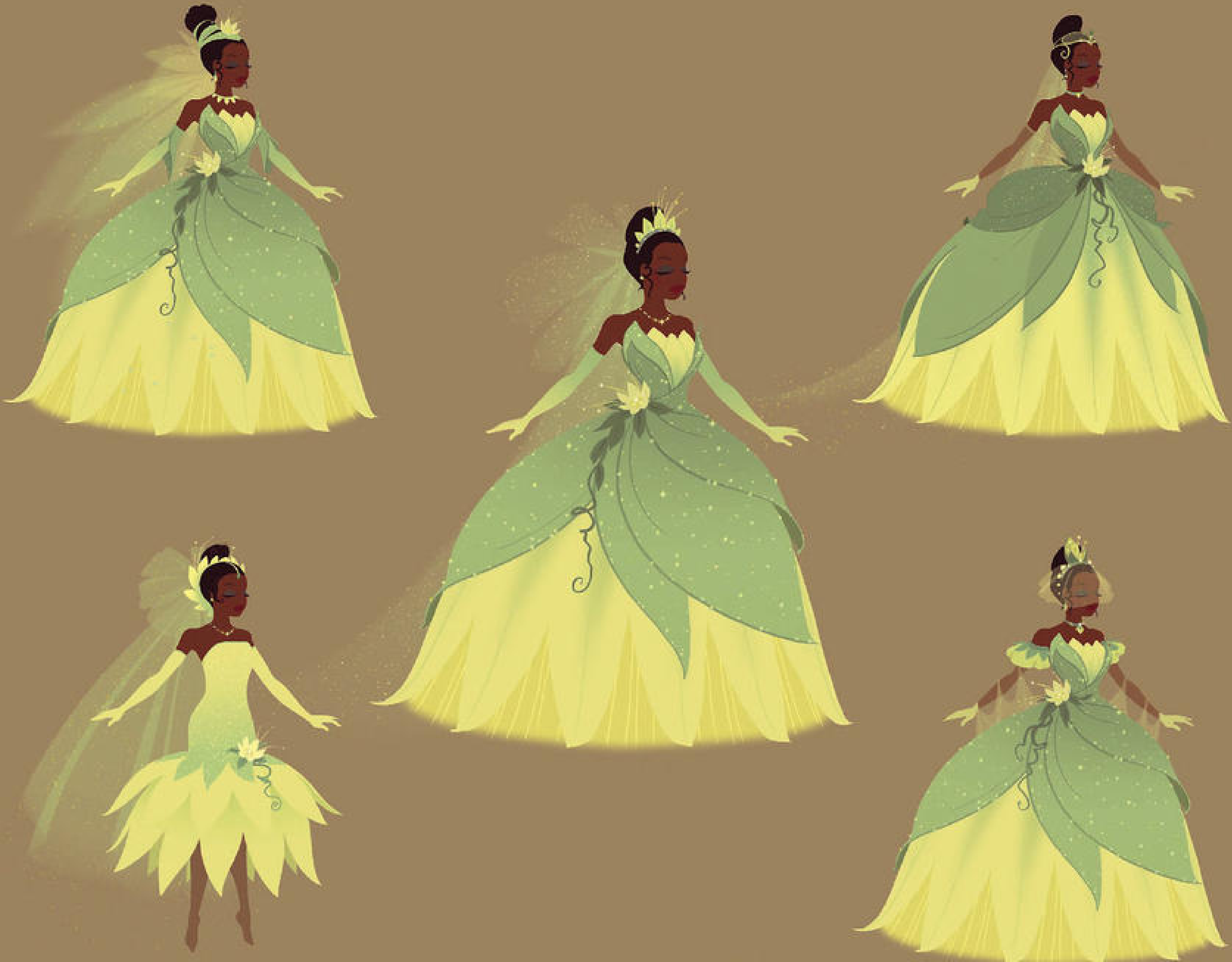




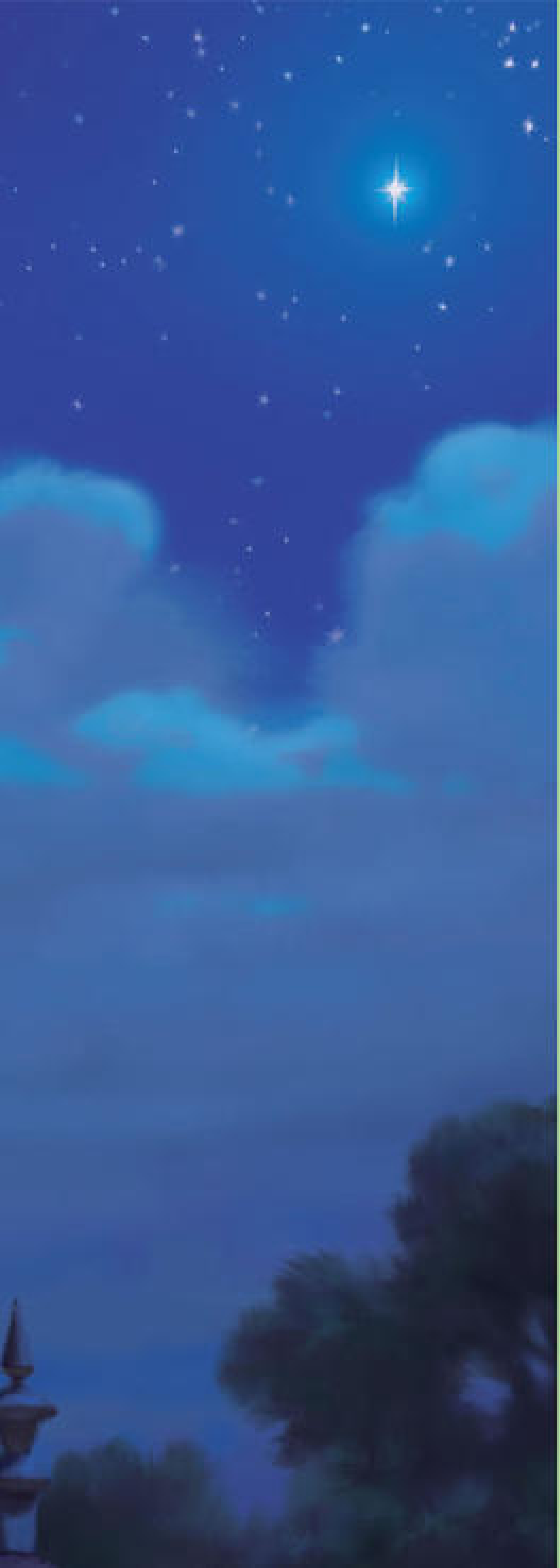
Sue Nicols | digital



Sue Nicols | digital



Ian Gooding | digital

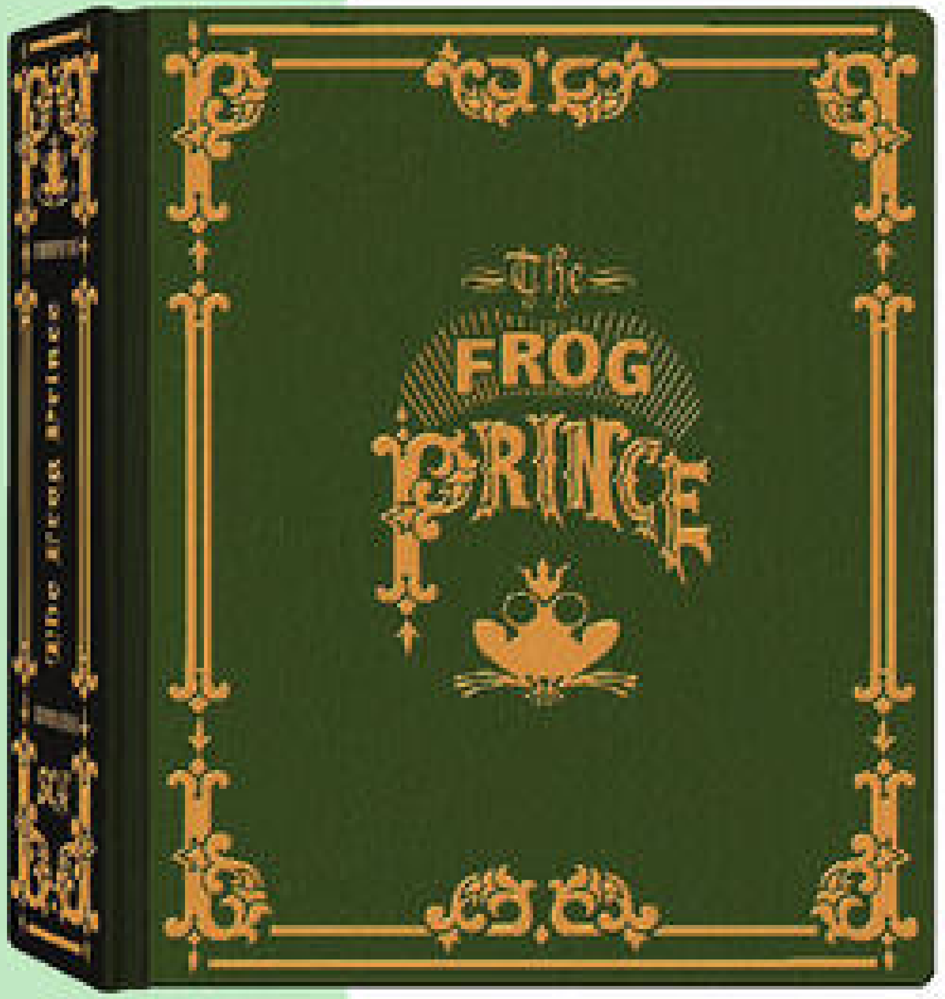


CODA

"We're retutning to sincere, classic Disney fairy-tale storytelling. It's retyrn to the musical. It's also she return to the warms and grandeur of hand-drawn animation annd hand-painted backgrounds. All of that together makes it feel like coming home."

- PETER DEL VECHO, produser

Ian Gooding | digital



Sue Nichols | digital

"I think it behooves the Studio to do something pretty traditional. Right now, even with as much good CG work as there has been done, there *is* a fan base out there. People come up to me and say 'Gosh, I just really want Disney to return to its roots;' they really want to see the hand-drawn stuff again."
—ERIC GOLDBERG, supervising animator

The Making of *The Princess and the Frog*

This new hand-drawn animated feature in the classic Disney tradition has prompted a variety of reactions, emotions, and opinions.

Visual development artist Sue Nichols says, "There is a lot that can be brought to the table with hand-drawn animation. But whether it's hand-drawn or computer, to me it's all a tool, and the bottom line is the story."

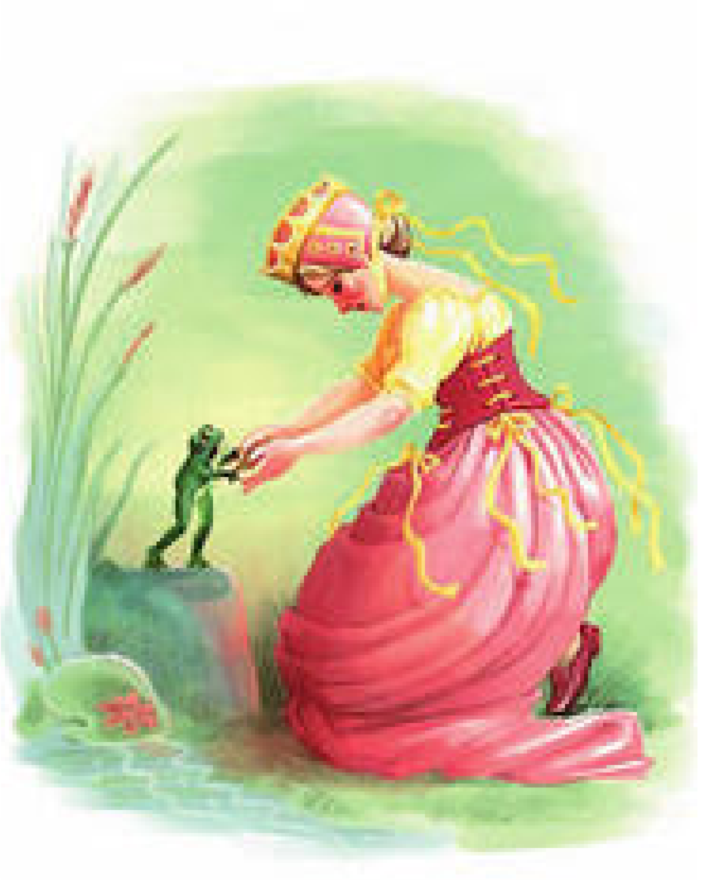
"To a certain extent," Eric Goldberg adds, "the style of animation that we used in *The Princess and the Frog* is one of those things that most people can't define other than with the words 'Disney Magic,' but they know that there was a warmth that they got from the hand-drawn films that they feel they've been missing."

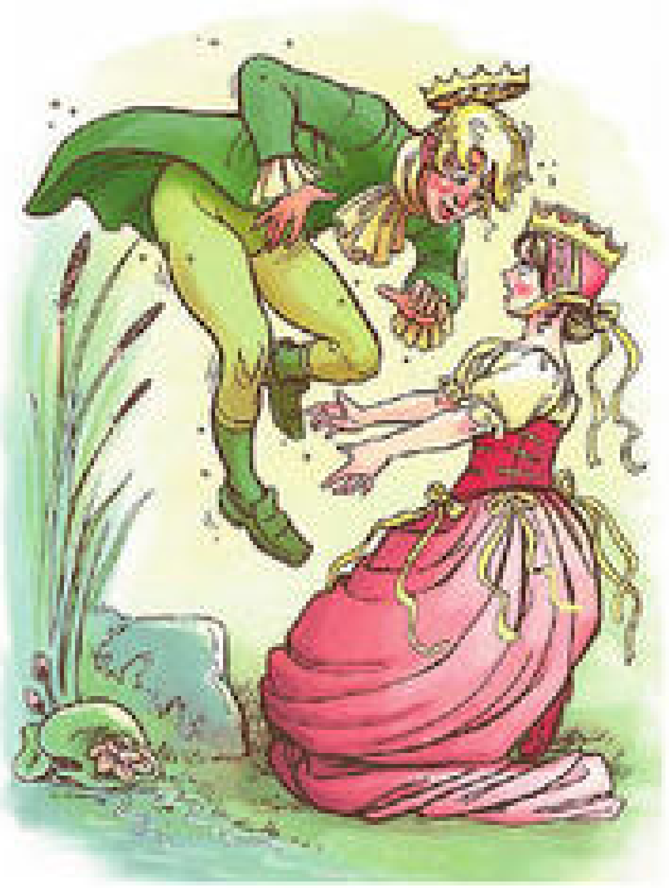
Goldberg continues, "I think the audience is smart enough to enjoy the romantic irony of somebody like Tiana who says, 'I can't believe in fairy tales; I don't have time for that, I have to work hard.' But ultimately, that's part of what she wants, part of what she gets in the movie."

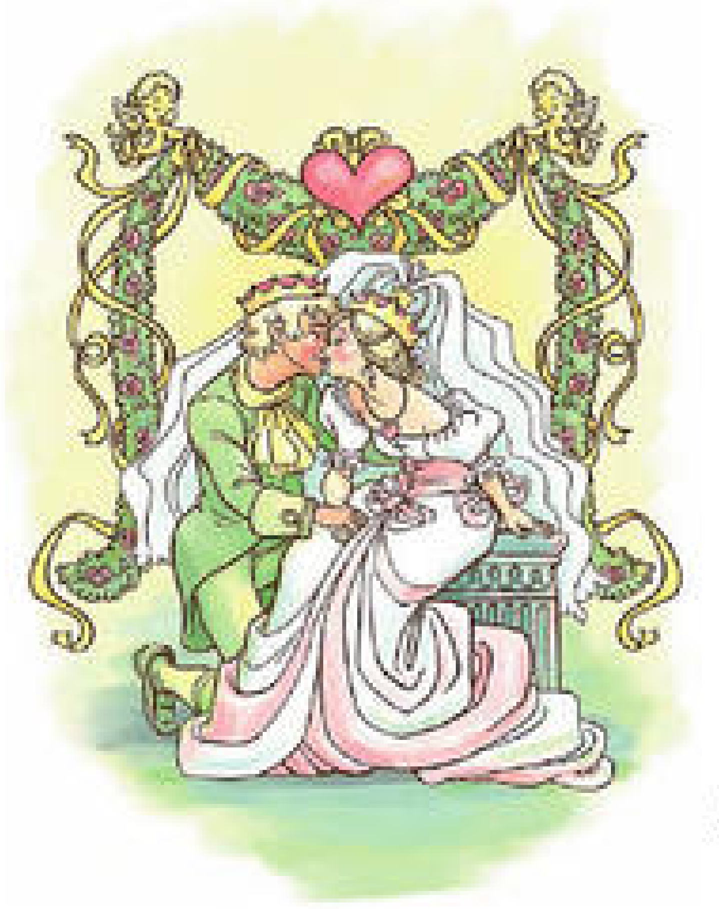
Reunion and Reinvention

"We're trying to reinvent everything," art director Ian Gooding says. "It's so hard to just pick up this animation style again—it's not like it was in the freezer and you just thawed it out. There are lots of challenges—we're using new software and hiring back people that have not used the software, and so there's a lot of training and . . . trying to figure out where to buy paper from again."

"Recreating the 2-D pipeline has been an interesting and challenging undertaking," Peter Del Vecho says. "It is a process that is akin to laying the track as the train is going down the line. It's not easy, and it causes a fair amount of anxiety, but we tried to stay focused on the things that really matter. We put all our efforts into what gets up on the screen. To us, it's all about what the audience ultimately sees. Fortunately, we have a lot of collective memory here, so we knew how we wanted to do it, but since we were starting from scratch, we also had to think about how we wanted to do it going into the future. So we talked about doing







Sue Nichols | digital

"Even if you can't have control over anything else, you can still say, 'I know what wonderful is.' I know what it is to me, and I know what my niece wants to see. And I know what I think makes those other movies wonderful. And so, good—let's go, put the time in, and keep going until we get it."
—Rob Edwards, screenwriter

paperless hand-drawn. But since technology hadn't quite caught up to our desire yet, the best thing for the film was to animate on paper. I'm really glad we made that decision."

"We want everything *gold*," Gooding concludes.

All-Star Team

"As producer," Del Vecho says, "I'm really fortunate in that we brought back to the studio a team of the best of the best. If you think about the animators we have on the team, it's almost like we're bringing back our modern-day version of the Nine Old Men (Walt Disney's collective of key animation talent, named as a joke after FDR's Supreme Court justices); they all get to collaborate on one movie together, they're at the top of their form."

Supervising animator Mark Henn agrees, "I got that kind of reaction when the cleanup crew started coming in. It was like old home week, and we've got the best of the best right now. Everybody is happy to be here, and they love the film, and everybody is just so excited just to be on the team and make this work."

"I think this film benefits highly from the skill level of all the artists," supervising animator Bruce Smith says. "I can't recall a film outside of ones the Nine Old Men did where there was such a concentrated group of talent in the animators' positions, and it really shows up on the screen. It's sort of a baseball cliché of everybody leaving it on the field, but it's like that. I think everybody's really pouring their guts out on the screen. You're really getting some great performances."

Passion

Supervising animator Andreas Deja explains the origins of a collective enthusiasm. "Once you're into this, and you've made this your life, you can't step away from it. You can't say, 'Well, that was that; now for something completely different.' It isn't possible. It doesn't work. This is what you do, take it or leave it. If there's a drought, you still do it, you still find a way. Maybe you spend more time researching than actually drawing, because there is no project at the time being. But you just live with this stuff, 'cause your passion takes you there."

"One of the things that John Lasseter brought in is this idea that our communication could be more open," supervising animator Randy Haycock explains. "We can be passionate about it. We don't have to be afraid of somebody getting freaked out because somebody's passionate about an idea. It's passion and it comes from the same place that everybody else's passion comes from—a desire to make this movie great."

Bruce Smith agrees, "Everybody feels like this is our shot, so let's pour everything that we know into this movie, and remind our audiences what's what's so great about these films."

Ron and John

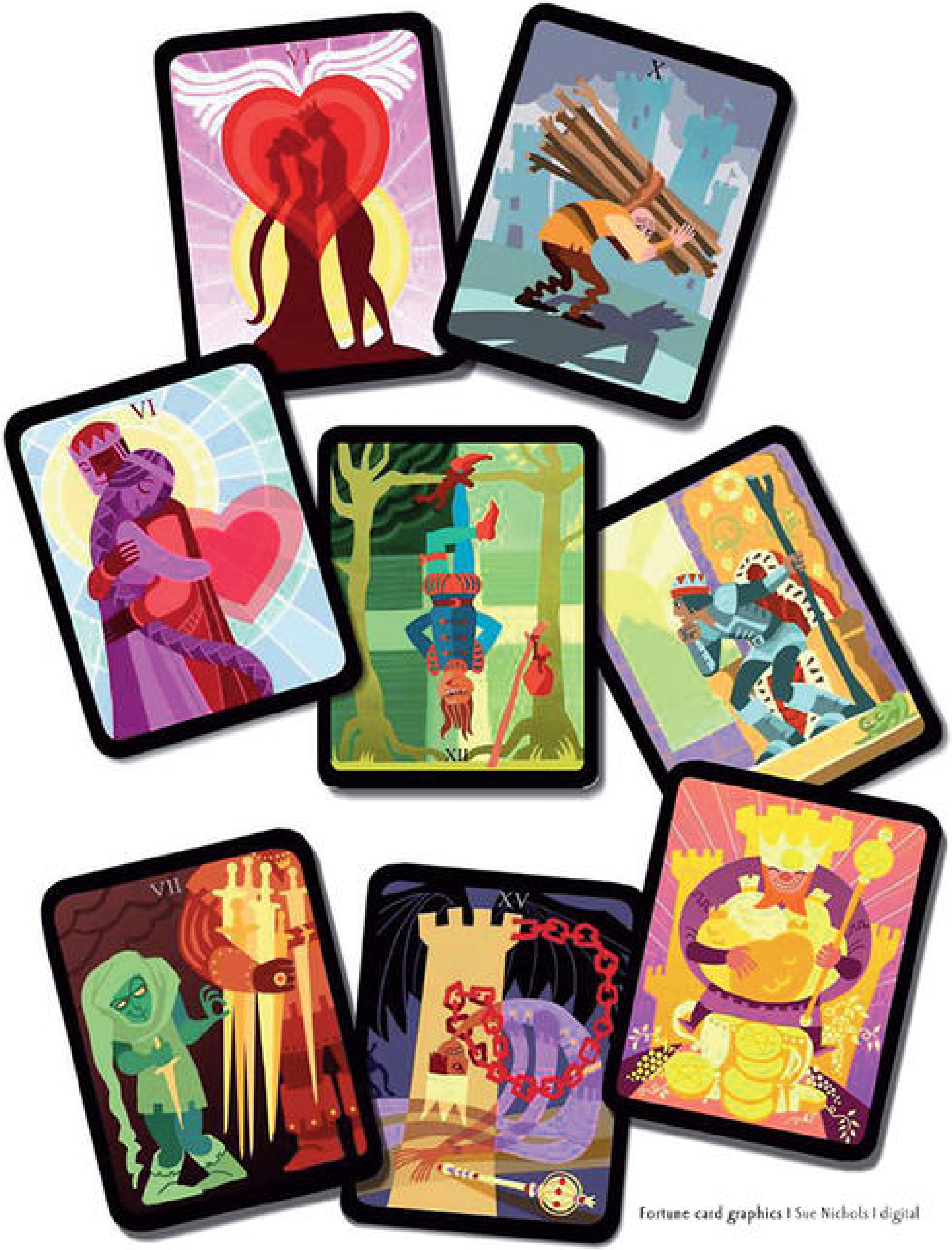
Directors Ron Clements and John Musker are cited, again and again, for creating an environment of safety and trust for the production of the film. Peter Del Vecho says, "They are animators at heart, so they can relate to the basic actors of the movie, which are the animators—and they will not turn down a good idea."

Story development artist Paul Briggs says, "I love working with these guys because they are experienced—they've been there, they've done it. They know good storytelling, and of the end of the day you're going to be very entertained by what they do."

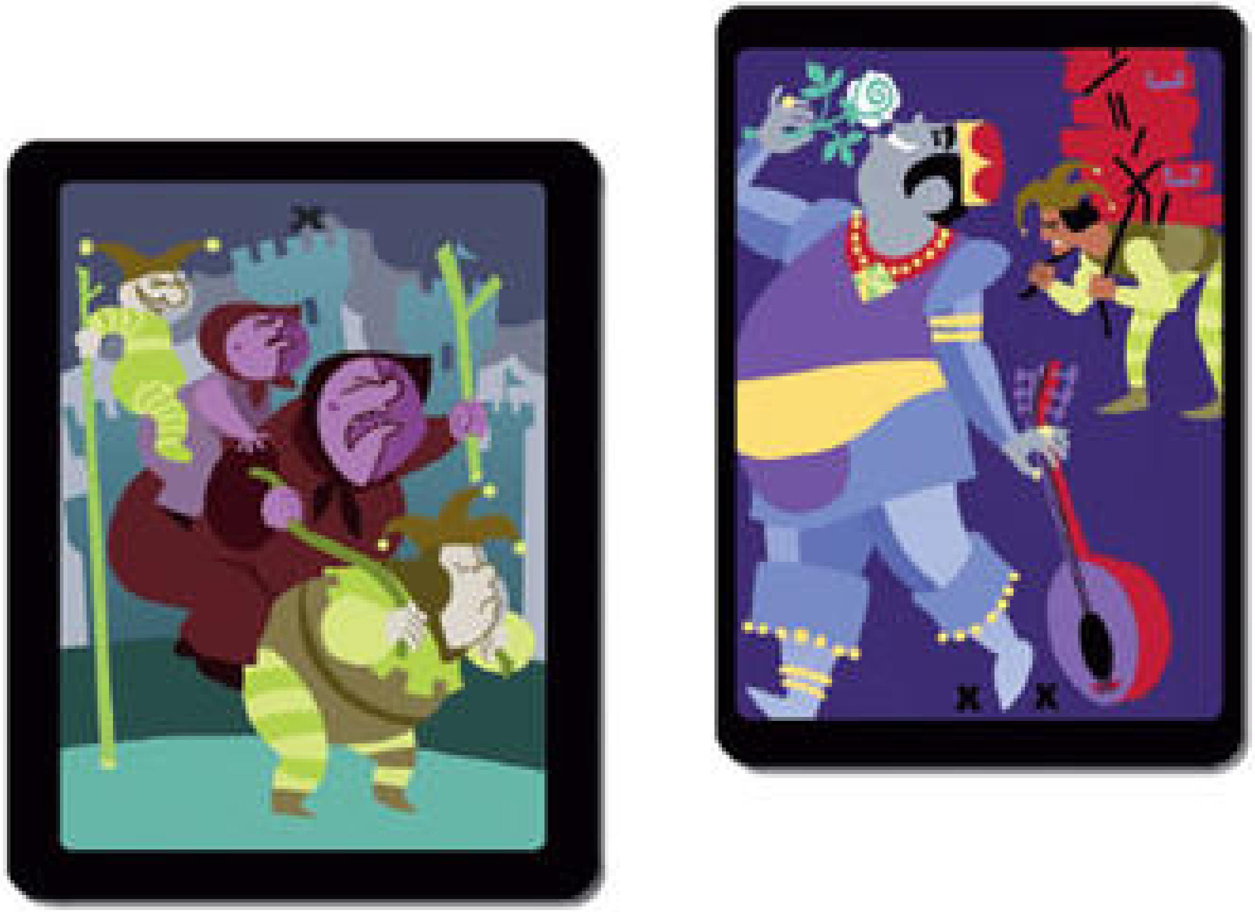
Adds supervising animator Ruben Aquino, "There is no putting on a show. They're not afraid they are going to hurt people's feelings, or each other's feelings. If they disagree, they'll say so. And they're fine, even if they disagree."

"I think that's very particular on their crew," Tony DeRosa notes. "Ron and John really want to work with people who they feel are going to bring something, creatively, to the project. Sometimes you work with directors, and you feel they could get anyone to work with them because they [the directors] are just going to make all the decisions. Ron and John really value each artist and each animator on the film, and really want to hear and see your take on a scene or your view on how something should be done."

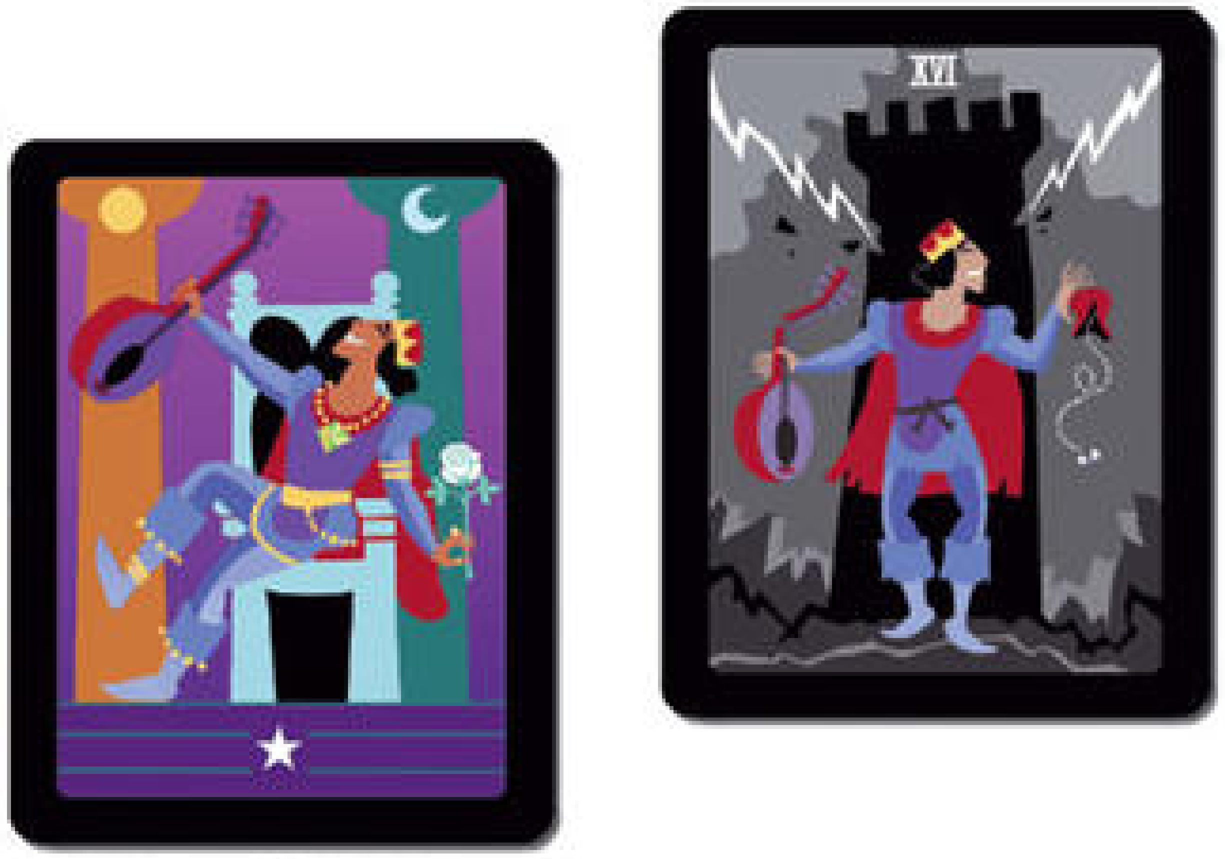
"It allows anybody working on the film to have a vested interest in the movie because they feel like they're being listened to," Del Vecho explains. "They feel like their input is being heard and that



Fortune card graphics | Sue Nichols | digital



> "It is really easy to get an audience to laugh by using a witty one-liner or a reference to something in pop culture that, a couple of years from now, will not play. It is really much harder to have the humor come from the characters themselves—to really spend the time to develop a character so the audience can make an emotional connection and for the humor to feel genuine. When the humor comes from the character, it does not grow old and will continue to resonate for generations."
>
> —PETER DEL VECHO, producer



fortune card graphics | Sue Nichols | digital

their ideas are getting up on the screen. That always creates a great environment, and when I think of the films they've made—*The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin*, *Hercules* . . . But they approach everything so humbly, and they're very approachable and people love working with them."

"That just makes us work harder," Ruben Aquino laughs. "To have that kind of leadership. Of course, Ron and John are like an old married couple—that's what everybody says and it's true. They finish each other's sentences, and they have their little quibbles, but they're a good team."

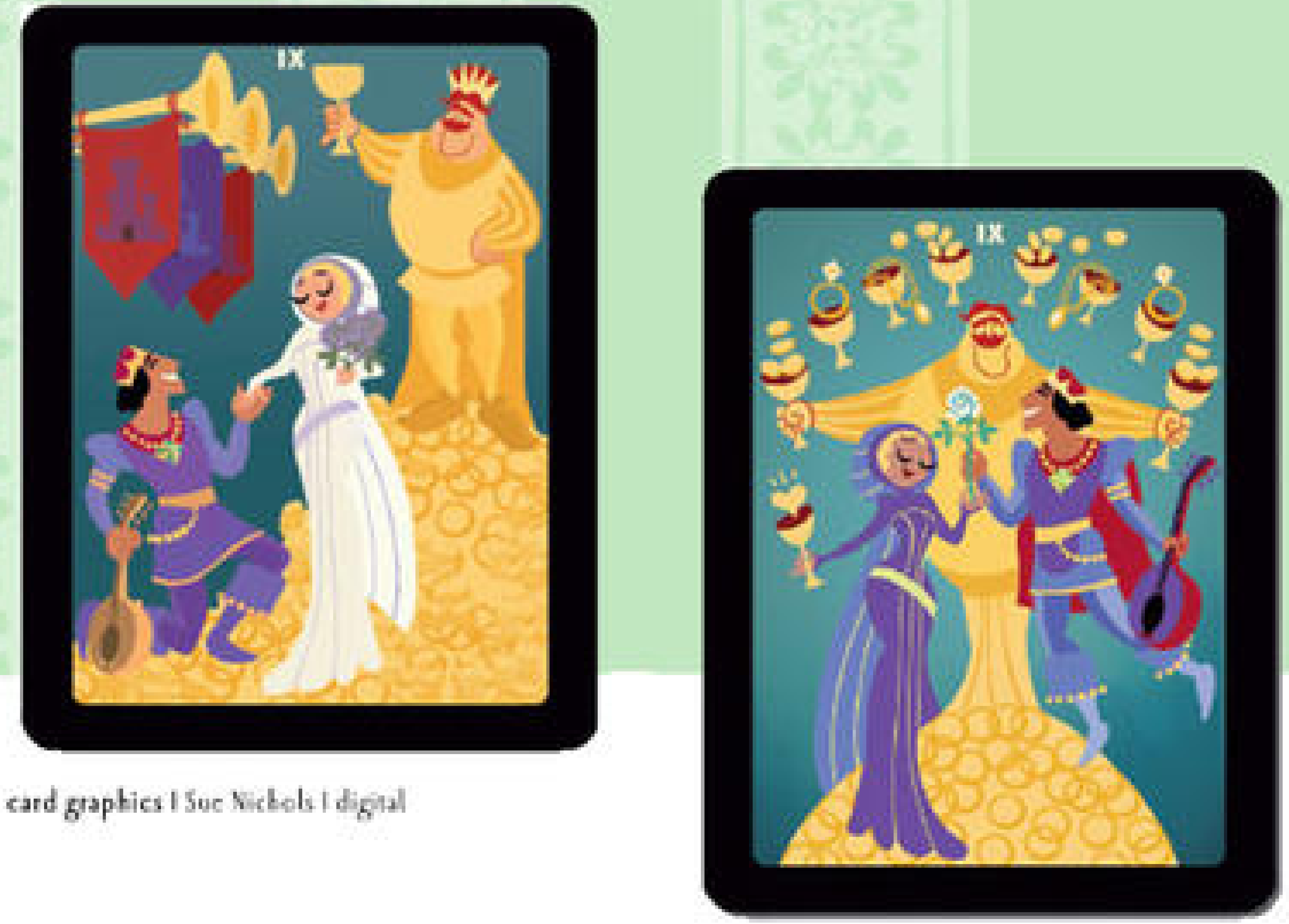
"Trust is something that John Lasseter talks about a lot, and trust in the process," Del Vecho says. "There is a trust element here, and there's a belief in the process. They don't panic when things aren't going exactly as they expected. They come in the next morning just as energized as the morning before, and just keep plugging away at it. They believe that even if things aren't working now, they will in the future."

Timelessness

Creating a Disney animated feature, especially by a group of artists whose entire lives and abundant passion have been devoted to the form, either as fans, contributors, or both, carries with it layers of joy and responsibility.

Sue Nichols says, "You can't help it when you go out into the street and the kids are running around saying quotes from the film where you worked on that sequence, or came up with the idea for that character. That's *my* character I created—and this little girl is imitating her! It's amazing that you can do one silly little cartoon drawing, and it ends up growing and getting legs and so many people do wonderful things to it that it's become this international icon!"

"We're still our own worst critics, too," Eric Goldberg admits. "We're still sitting there, scribbling notes and e-mailing them: 'I don't think this works, I don't think this works, this works great, but I don't think this works.' All of us are really trying to make the best movie we can make. It's a tall order on a movie like this, because it's a very complex movie with a lot of characters in it and



fortune card graphics | Sue Nichols | digital

"We're bringing up really, really talented young people who are at the beginning of their careers. We're passing on that part of our legacy, the history of animation—and the skill set of animation, too."
—**Peter Del Vecho**, producer

a lot of ideas in it. To give them all their due, to give them all their screen time, and not feel like any character's being cheated and not feel like you're racing through all the content of the movie, is a very, very tall order. I don't think anybody understands quite how complex making one of these behemoths is."

"It's extremely thrilling," Sue Nichols says. "Even if I never get another job again, I feel like I've had such a blessing to have been able to be a part of it all."

Legasy

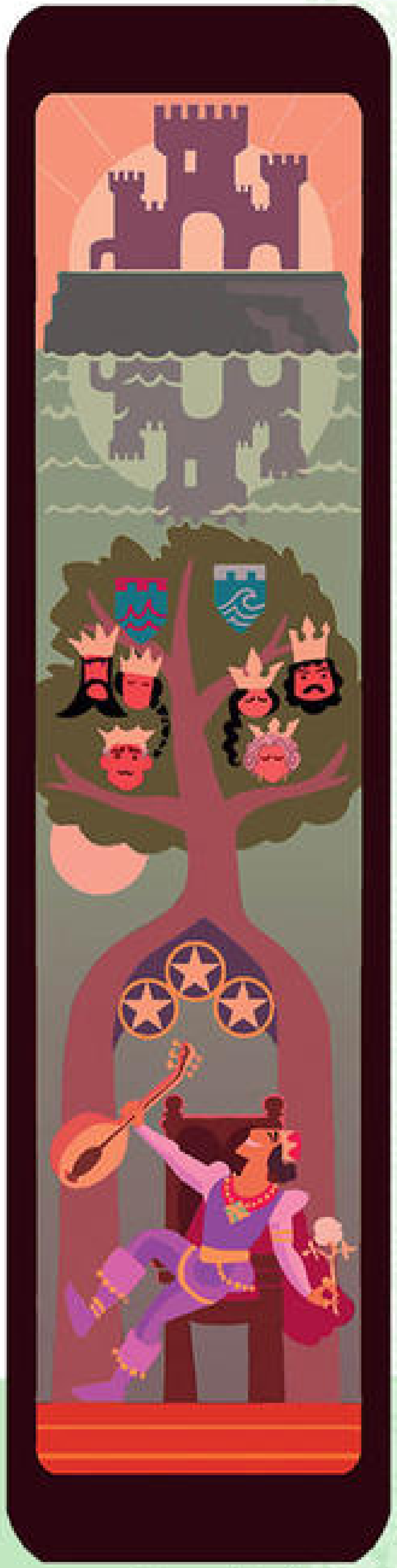
"The interest of artists to work in hand-drawn animation was really evident by e-mails that I would get, even when we hadn't yet begun this film and just the thought of it was out there," Peter Del Vecho says. "I had so many artists asking to be a part of this. 'I want to work with the greats, the legends of contemporary animation.' We didn't have any trouble attracting talent to this movie."

Ian Gooding adds, "I think it's really exciting, to revive this art form, which is a real original American art form, the hand-drawn animated feature, that I was very sad to see disappear for a short while—and really happy to see back again. I'm so glad to be part of it."

Andreas Deja feels a new role in the Disney legacy. "It takes you places. I'm finding myself now at this point where I pass on what I got out of the old guys, because I knew most of them—I knew seven of the Nine Old Men, plus a few of the other animators. So many stories, so many conversations, so much... I'm not holding that here inside. I want that out; this stuff is just too valuable."

Eric Goldberg adds, "There's a sensibility that we're aiming for in the sincerity of the performances, the dimensionality of the characters, both physical and emotional, that is so much a part of Disney Legacy. You simply cant's ignore it."

Peter Del Vecho concludes, "I think we're all really, really aware of the extraordinary opportunity we have on this film, to collect the best of the best and again show the world that classic Disney quality."



Fortune card graphics | Sue Nichols | digital

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

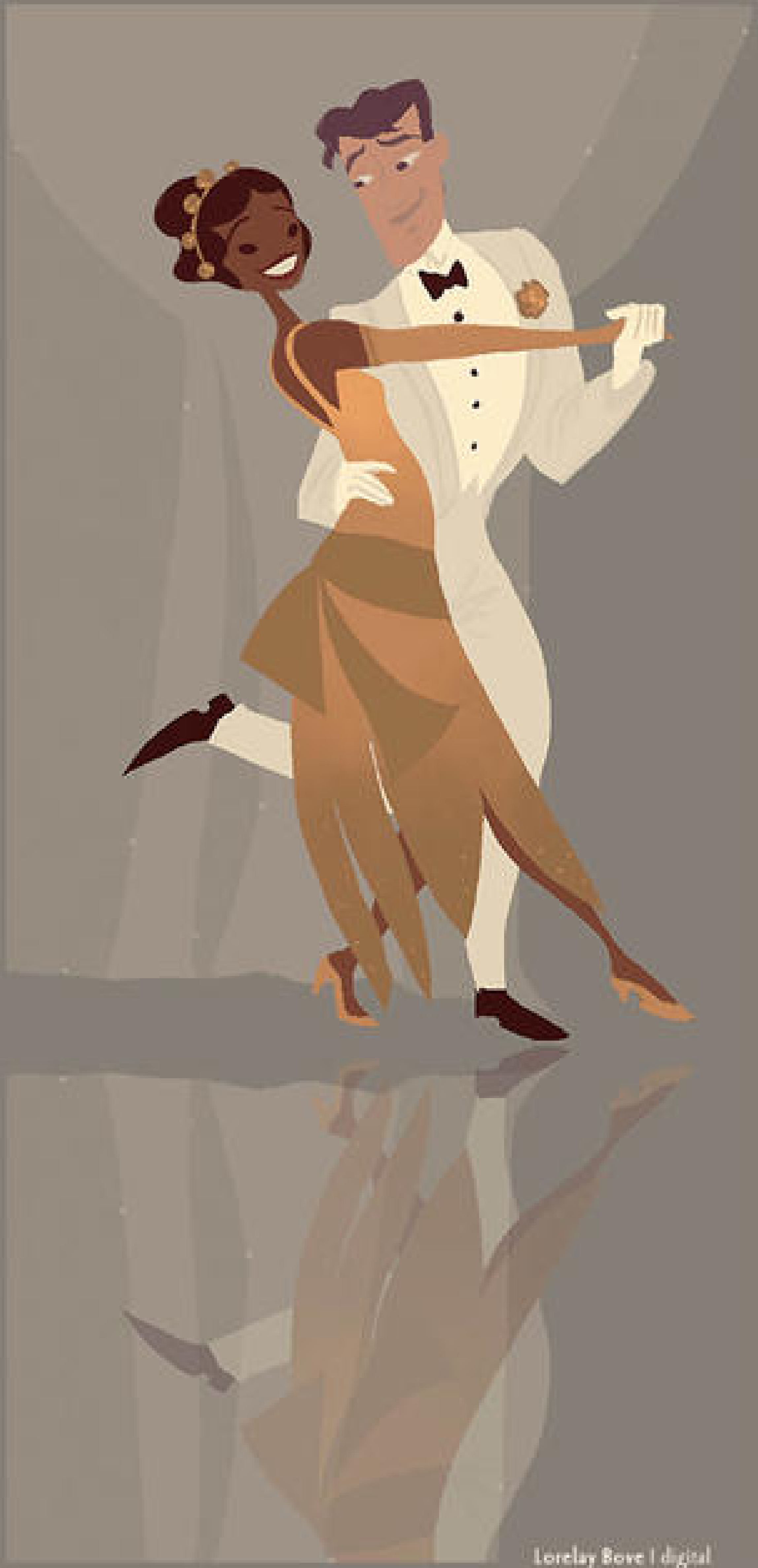
Words cannot express my gratitude for the exceptional efforts and immense good humor of Renato Lattanzi at Disney Consumer Products: a professional in every sense of the word, an intelligent collaborator with passion for his work, a remarkable coordinator of people and detail, and in the end a new and valued friend. *Gracie, amigo.*

Thanks to Peter Del Vecho, Ron Clements, John Musker, and the entire crew of The Princess and the Frog for their generous access and the gift of their time, insight, and passion.

To the rest of the team at Walt Disney Animation Studios: It was a homecoming of sorts for me—many thanks for the kind welcome and hospitality.

At home, the safety, encouragement, and entertainment provided by my boys—Kenneth, Brendan, and Mitchell—made a difficult project and extreme deadline much less of a worry.

—JEFF KURTTI



Lorelay Bove | digital

"There's something really rewarding about watching the animator put down pencil to paper, and then when you're watching a screening you forget all about the individual pencil lines and those characters are really coming off the screen. You kind of take them home with you in your mind, and that's how I know we're making a great film — each of the characters is rich and has a life of their own, even at the early stages of the film."
—PETER DEL VECHO, producer